



ANTILLEN REVIEW

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**Weathering the
storm**

**Aruba renews
confidence**

**Windward Islands
shopping for future
partners**

**Cause of
press-freedom**

**Antilles and
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**The issue of
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**Curaçao's
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FROM THE EDITOR

Journalism has been under fire, not only in the United States (see Time Magazine of December 12) but also in the Netherlands Antilles. Early that same month the renowned Dutch weekly Elsevier Magazine published a largely concocted and utterly misleading article about Curaçao, announcing an imminent revolution and the dispatch of a contingent of Marines from Holland to prevent the envisaged bloodshed. In fact nothing of the kind was brooding nor were any marines sent. The damage to the island's already tottering tourism must be estimated considerable. The story, no doubt, sold well. It also triggered off some nasty backbiting between two leading newspapers in the country. Elsevier quoted as one of its sources the Beurs- en Nieuwsberichten, a nation-wide daily in the Dutch language. It was, however, competitor Amigoe, which first reported on the Elsevier publication, mentioning in a factual manner the Beurs' indirect involvement quotes from Elsevier. The article drew a furious reaction from prime minister Martina, who denounced the often derogatory writing about the country in the Beurs. The latter responded with a vitriolic editorial calling both the Amigoe and premier Martina names. In this connection the findings of the Inter American Press Association (see Special Feature), recently meeting in Lima, Peru, rating the Netherlands Antilles as one of the very few countries in which freedom of the press does indeed

exist, convey an urgent message. Journalism in the Antilles will have to discipline itself, if it wants to prevent being disciplined. Anger about superficial and sensational reporting is rising and might result – with the best of intents – in a curtailing of that precious freedom. A development which would be much to the liking of the so-called progressives, who view the press as a tool for development rather than a means of free expression. In this climate of freedom on the one hand and deminishing respect for journalism on the other, AR completed its third volume. It will continue to defend the first value, as much as it regrets the second development. While continuing our efforts to attain to the best some changes will occur while we move into our fourth volume. The Publisher and co-founder of AR, Mr. J. Koridon, has decided to terminate his involvement with the magazine as far as publishing is concerned. It will, however, continue to be printed at the Curaçoesche Courant N.V., of which Mr. Koridon is the managing-director, thus guaranteeing the quality of print. Mr. Koridon's contribution to AR has been of immense value and we are sad to see his name disappear from the top of this page. The continuing cooperation with the Curaçoesche Courant N.V. fortunately assures both the readers and editorial staff of his advisory contribution in the future.

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WEATHERING THE STORM

AT LEAST FOR THE TIME BEING

“Every crisis has positive angles. As times get more difficult man becomes more inventive. There is every reason to believe that we will survive the present recession and come out stronger. After all our only natural resource in The Antilles is the human being, we ourselves. All the more reason why we should not despair.”

Mr. Ong A Kwie, trade-union leader, early December talking to AR’s editor.

If positive thinking has indeed power, it may be just what the country needs. In fact there seems to be more around of that rare mental quality than many expected.

While the news from Holland during November was a daily litany of demonstrations and strikes protesting severe measures to trim the economy, the Antillean people showed considerably more restraint in the face of their own and quite similar plight. Although a number of negotiations with the unions have not yet been concluded, it is fair to state that common sense is prevailing on all sides. At least a period of calm was reached and is expected to last through the holidays. It is also expected that the labour talks at SHELL as well as with the unions of civil servants will be concluded satisfactorily if not before the end of the year then early in 1984.

If so, there might be a chance that the down-hill movement of the economy will be brought to a halt. It would also go far to restoring the country’s image abroad,

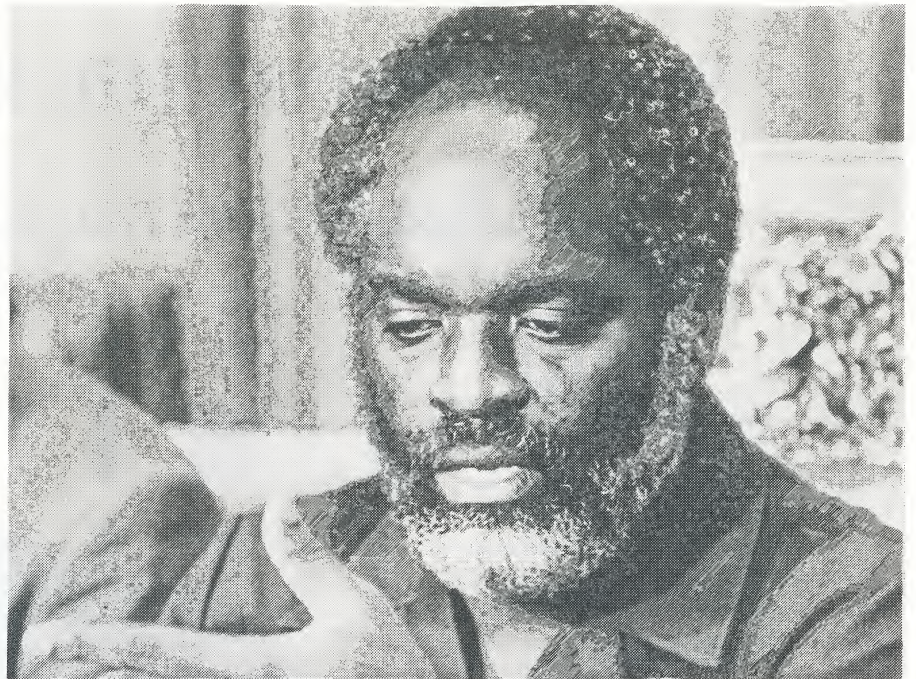


Mr. Ong A Kwie

which suffered badly by negative reporting both at home and in Holland (see Editorial).

Police

The growing concern amongst many about the apparent indicisiveness of the Martina Cabinet, was at least partly appeased by the Prime-Minister's handling of a police dispute. A shortage of police-personnel had forced the management of the corps to recruit as many as 40 men from the Netherlands. The need for additional personnel was mostly felt in the lower ranks. Many Antillean officers actually saw their promotion postponed because of a lack of openings in the higher ranks. The police leadership apparently did not conduct its acquisition policy carefully enough. When the first Dutchmen arrived, several of them had in the meantime been promoted in Holland and thus had to be employed in the Antilles accordingly. Discontent in the corps, which had been simmering because of many other grievances hitherto unattended to, rose quickly. A protest meeting was held during working hours and the public was bothered by a sudden meticulous checking of driving licenses during the rush hour. The Prime-Minister, who presently also holds the portfolio of Jus-



arresting police revolt.

tice, moved fast. He denounced the harassment of the public in a special TV broadcast demanding an immediate end to it. The police concurred and a night-long meeting was held with the Union leadership and the Prime-Minister present to arrive at a solution. Leaving the meeting at six in the morning Mr. Marti-

na, who was to fly at seven with Her Royal Highness Princess Juliana to St. Maarten (see People) told reporters he had been convinced that many of the police's complaints were justified. He had, moreover, been scantily informed by the police leadership, he declared, indicating at least mismanagement of the recruitment pro-

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ceedings. A committee was installed to look into the matter and advise him at short notice. The police union was satisfied to have at last been able to vent its grievances with the outlook that action will be taken within an acceptable period of time. Mr. Martina's performance was widely praised. Said union leader Ong A Kwie: "the man functions best when confronted with a crisis. Unfortunately we cannot create one every day."

Shell

At Shell matters slowly edged towards agreement. After negotiations about a new labour agreement stalemated and the old one expired, Shell's management announced a number of economizing measures. The union (PWFC) protested this one-sided action and threatened with action from her side. The Minister of Labour ordered a cooling off period of one month. Still no agreement was reached. But neither did the union follow up its threats. Mr. Wilson, Shell's manager, in an exclusive interview in the daily *Amigoe* declared that his orders from London were quite clear. Either the union agrees to the proposed pay-cuts and other economizing measures, in which case Shell will continue its construction plans for the next five years, or the Shell company will leave the island within three or four years.

Understandably the union accused Mr. Wilson of exercising undue pressure, but in such subdued terms that most observers expect an agreement soon after the holidays. Even more so because other unions (construction workers etc.) are putting pressure on the PWFC to give in, in order to safeguard the jobs of their members. Shell intends to invest at least 80 million guilders per year, which would not create new employment but at least keep many workers on the job. The majority of both the union leadership and union members seems convinced that a step back is necessary to save the situation.

Drydock

At the Curaçao Dry Dock (CDM) in the meantime agreement was reached about

considerable pay-cuts (23%). The workers preferred to accept less pay rather than see several hundred men lose their jobs. The management subsequently lowered the prices of ship-repairs, which led to a rapid rise in clients. Under the former management the CDM had priced itself almost completely out of the market. It is now hoped that the company will be out of the red in three to four years. Much credit for the positive developments at CDM is given to Mr. Mario Evertsz, a relatively young Antillean, who has shown himself to be the kind of manager required by the times.

Pending

The unions of civil servants still strongly oppose the measures announced by the government, which imply a loss of vacation bonuses and the automatic compensation of the cost of living index. The union leaders are quite adamant in their refusal to agree to the Government's policies, but the impression is that the members are not prepared to put up a real fight. Most probably the stumbling stone will be the matter of vacation bonuses. Whether the Government will be prepared to deal in case all other measures are accepted, is

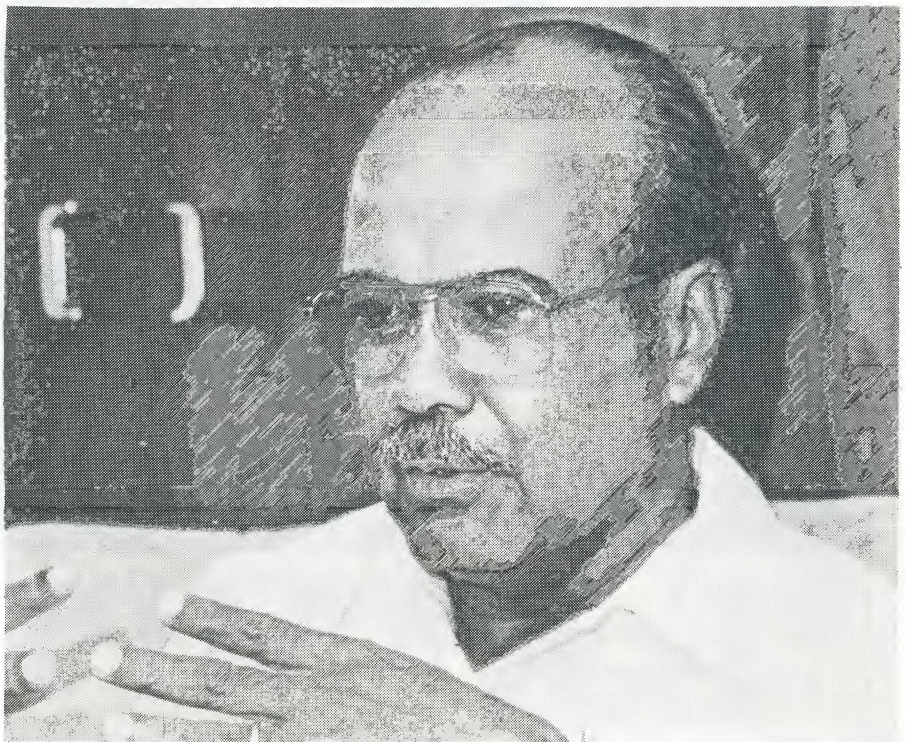
still an open question.

At ALM, the national carrier, no progress in the negotiations aimed at slimming down the company has as yet been made. A break-through in the case of the civil servants, might be of decisive influence.

Worrisome

The overall situation does certainly not warrant too much optimism. Said Mr. Ong A Kwie: "many people are losing their jobs without much unheaval being made about it. The fact is that growing unemployment creates a situation in which social unrest becomes a very real possibility." Even though tourism seems to pick up, shops keep complaining about low sales. One of the largest constructions firms (see AR vol.3 nr.5) has indeed folded. If the recession continues much longer it may be expected that more companies, in particular shops, will have to close their doors.

Government measures with regard to import and profit taxes (see Aruba) have not met much appreciation in business circles. Although the business community has been urging the Cabinet to take measures to prevent the economy worsening further, it is argued that these particular



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decrees are too much of a short term nature and will chase away potential investors.

But while the situation admittedly is quite worrisome, there are signs (as indicated above) that the people are prepared to face the inevitable lowering of the standard of living realistically. And that, it should be realized, is in itself a positive development.

Cabinet

The Martina Government in the meantime seems to near its end. As was to be expected Aruba's majority party MEP, which is not represented in the cabinet has stepped up its pressure to bring about the fall of the present coalition. In particular minority party PPA, which is a coalition member, has been feeling the heat. Not only the MEP but also many businessmen in Aruba, enraged about the tax measures, have been calling for the PPA's departure from the cabinet. Observers are of the opinion that the party would commit suicide by hanging on. Mr. Martina has declared that he is prepared to reshuffle the cabinet, but at the same times feels that the general situation in the country does not allow a prolonged formation period during which the decision making process would stagnate.

The MEP and opposition party DP of Curaçao, however, are demanding a new formation. They argue that in the end the country will be better served by a new and capable cabinet, implying that the present one has failed. But it should be observed that the MEP by virtue of its separatist ideology is only interested in furthering the Aruban cause. It must therefore be questioned whether the country as a whole would benefit from a cabinet in which the MEP would play an important part. Most observers, moreover, are of the opinion that Mr. Don Martina is the right man for the moment to lead the country and probably the only one who can prevent the outbreak of social unrest.

Another unfortunate aspect should be mentioned. Mr. Martina's own party MAN, which rose to power four years ago ex nihilo in a very short time, has not been able to structure itself sufficiently. Disagreements and internal powerstruggles have weakened the party considerably. Thus Mr. Martina sorely lacks the backing he needs. It may even be questioned whether he still can count on a majority in parliament as some of the MAN's delegates have fallen out with the party.

Governor

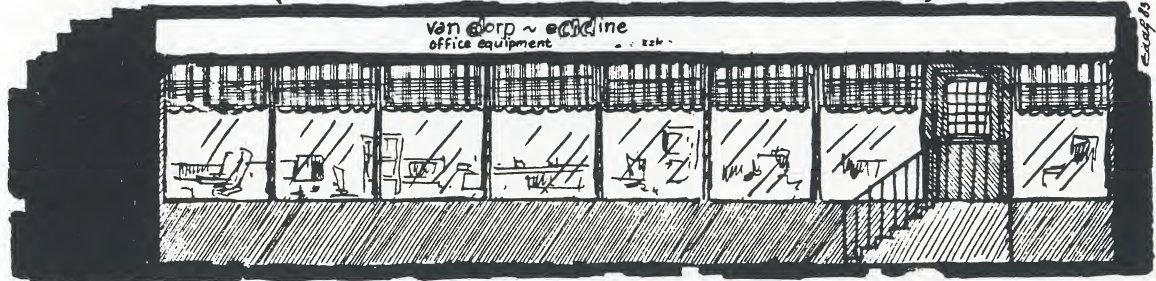
The above mentioned developments which may soon lead to a political crisis will at the same time be the first test of

Mr. René Römer, recently appointed to the position of Governor of The Netherlands Antilles. Representative of the Queen of the Netherlands it will be his task to appoint a *formateur* and while not getting involved politically assist in the process towards a new government.

Mr. Römer's appointment was very well received on all the six islands. In particular because efforts to have someone appointed congenial to the ruling party (of Curaçao) had failed. For the sake of safeguarding democracy it was generally felt that the first citizen of the country should be a decidedly non-party man with outstanding qualities. Mr. Römer who had an impressive career and last served as Dean of the University of the Netherlands Antilles seemed to most observers the right choice. ■

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RENEWED CONFIDENCE MARRED BY SERIOUS SET—BACKS

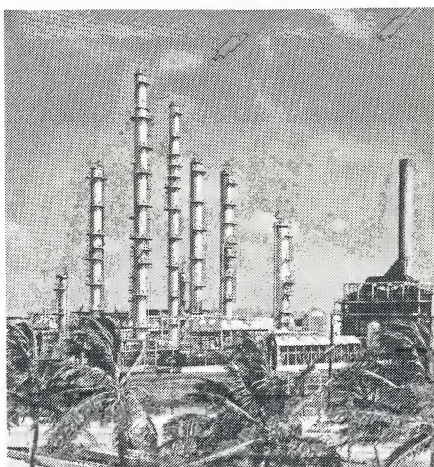
by H. Timmer

Good news of a rebounding tourist business was marred by a series of set-backs for the economy of Aruba. The good news is that all hotels are fully occupied since the middle of November and the outlook for the season is excellent. Most hotels are almost fully booked till April 1984. The fact that the main pillar of Aruba's economy shows strength and was able to bounce back from the serious drop in Venezuelan tourism in such a short time gives the Arubans renewed confidence in the future of its economy. However, recent serious set-backs in other sectors cast a dark shadow on the confidence and happiness on account of a banner season for tourism.

Bad news came in from the Lago refinery, which has to reduce its output and as a result will have to start a program of cost reduction resulting in lay-offs both in the refinery and with several contractors who regularly employ hundreds of people on Lago maintenance and investment projects. For the island it will also mean a stop to the windfall profit tax coming from Lago in recent years. During the last 3 years Lago paid a total of appr. 300 million guilders more than the minimum tax established for the refinery. Mr. Antonio Cavallaro, Lago's new president per January 1, 1984, will have to slim down the company to the new realities and make it profitable at a lower production level. Hopefully he will be successful and will bring Lago's profits back to a level which will allow the Aruba Government to enjoy high tax receipts again. For the coming years, however, it is realistic to assume that with the departure of Mr. Girard Golden as president, gone are also the "golden" years of extremely high tax income for Aruba.

Utilities

Another set-back in Aruba's development is the ever present weakness of the



Lago

water and electricity plant. After years of planning and repairing, of building new units of various kinds, the plant still appears to be extremely vulnerable. It is now known to everybody that no guarantees for uninterrupted supply of (clean) water and electricity can be given unless first hundreds of millions will be invested in renewal of obsolete installations. Where to get the money at a time when the windfall profit tax from Lago will end, while most of the past tax income from Lago seems to have been spent already on nobody knows exactly what, is the big question, a question that worries Arubans of all parties and of all sectors of the community. Aruba is faced with much less income at a time it needs much more.

Taxes

On top of all these problems came the decision of the Central Government to tax the public of the three ABC islands (the Windward islands are exempted again) for problems mainly concerning a Curaçao situation. The increases in taxes on gasoline, cigarettes, beer and liquor and

the higher import duties on electronic equipment and cars, brought about a storm of protests in Aruba. Not only will it hurt the competitive position of the just recovering tourist oriented economy of Aruba, but it will also increase the cost of living at a time when adjustment of wages to increased cost of living is fast becoming a thing of the past. Most Arubans do more or less understand nowadays that for the time being not much wage increase can be expected, but it is considered unreasonable that the Government is presenting the bill for its inefficiency and inertia to the public in general.

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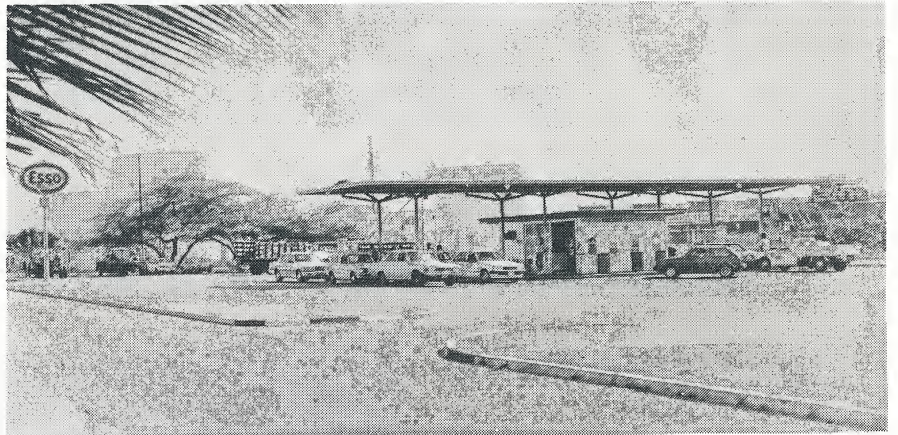
Although most criticism voiced at this moment concerns the direct effects of the higher duties and taxes, the grumbling goes much deeper — especially among those who are familiar with economic development and the difficulty of getting risk capital for our economic growth and new employment opportunities — where it concerns the planned increase in the profit tax. Exactly at a time when everybody expected the government to present an attractive and aggressive program of incentives for risk capital in order to stimulate investment, it turns the other way and reduces the return on risk capital by approximately 20%. An unbelievable step, which everybody hopes will die a quick death when it is proposed in the Central Parliament. No more harm could be done to the investment climate and no worse moment could have been chosen. The lessons given in the IMF report on the state of the economy of our islands appear to have been in vain. The public sector has to be reduced in size and cost, says the IMF and the private sector must be stimulated to grow. The private sector can of course only grow if private money is invested. The risk capital can be found everywhere, waiting to be invested, but investment will only take place, if the

prospect of a return on the money is in balance with the risk. Everybody knows that investing in an enterprise carries a certain risk. The owners of capital are very choosy and will not invest in risky enterprises if the expected return on capital is less than the return on safe government bonds. Neither will they invest here, if opportunities in other countries look more promising. Like it or not this is the reality we have to live with. If we raise our profit tax level now, at a time when for instance in Holland serious discussion is going on to reduce the level of profit tax or even eliminate the tax completely for the part of the profit that is paid out to the shareholders (because that part comes under income tax and should not be taxed twice), we will really cause some surprises in the investment world. We will then probably have the highest profit-tax level of the world and at least be higher than Holland, certainly a dubious achievement.

Alternative

Rather than increasing taxes on enterprises the approach of the Governments, both Cental and Insular, should be to come up with a comprehensive plan. Such plan should in the first place be directed towards strengthening the private sector, stimulating investment in new enterprises, extending existing enterprises, attracting foreign capital and stimulating re-investment of local capital. More employment can only be a goal if we do something to reach that goal. Without investments no new jobs can be created. The second leg of the plan should be trimming down government to size, increase the performance level of the public servant, discuss reductions of wages and benefits with the unions and come to agreements with the employees by explaining the situation. It will still be necessary to take measures such as have been taken now: higher taxes on gasoline, beer, liquor and maybe temporary increases of some import duties, but the measures will be accepted much more easily, if they form part of a package directed towards putting the economy on the right tracks again. Without other measures the problems will get worse and within a short time we would have gasoline at f. 1.-- per liter and import duties on cars of 100%.

Aruba fears that the Central Government will not come out with the comprehensive plans needed to revitalize the economy. Aruba also believes that each is-



Gasprices going up

land has its own possibilities and problems and needs a specific approach directed towards these opportunities. Measures imposed on Aruba during the 2 years before the uncoupling will take place can be detrimental to the Aruban economy. After January 1, 1986 measures of this nature cannot be taken anymore without the consent of Aruba, but till that crucial date the other islands, with or without the support of the smallest party of Aruba, can make laws without Aruba's approval.

Outlook

The present state of the economy of Aruba is a mixed bag of good and bad. Adjustment to lower tax income and growing unemployment for the coming years will be the sobering factor. New confidence in the tourist sector will probably get investment plans off the shelf and on the drawing board again. However, many shops that catered to the eager-to-buy rich Venezuelans will have a difficult process of adjusting to the as numerous but more thrifty American tourists. Several shops will have to close in the process, others will fill the gap. There will be room for expansion in the hotel sector, which can give the construction industry sufficient work and keep unemployment at a reasonable level. All in all a not too gloomy outlook, if the Government handles its problems carefully and with wisdom. Both the politicians in Aruba and on the other islands will have to take a close look at their government structures and take definite steps to trim down the num-

ber of people on the payrolls (including TAV etc.) of the public sector. For Aruba this restructuring can be part of the new set-up needed for January 1, 1986, when status-aparte starts. Aruba will have to set up and maintain an efficient apparatus with a very limited number of departments which should be as small as possible, and using the most modern methods of administration.

Curaçao and the other 4 islands must also make up their minds of how they will be governed after January 1, 1986. The double tier government structure presently used for the six islands cannot be maintained after the uncoupling of Aruba. For reasons of cost the islands will have to choose for a return to a centralised system of government — heavily dominated by Curaçao of course — and sharply reduced island departments, or go the other way and decentralize almost completely, with a very small federation type of central government with a very limited program of items of general interest. A discussion that certainly cannot wait till 1986!

The recent set-backs in the Aruban economy have more or less silenced the discussions about independence yes or no and when. The economy is now the preoccupation of everyone and the topic of all discussion. As little as future independence plays a part in these thoughts and discussions, with short term set-backs crowding out long term planning, the Arubans all the more look forward to the uncoupling from Curaçao on January 1, 1986. Aruba still has confidence that it can make out on its own better than locked up in the Netherlands Antilles. ■

SOUTH AMERICA:

THE FUTURE OF ARUBA'S PORT

Friday, December 9, a huge new crane was officially put into use at Aruba's new container port. At the occasion Mr. Chris van Krimpen, Managing director of Aruba's Port Authority (APA) gave his view about the future of container traffic in the region and the possibilities they offer Aruba. First published in "Voz Portuario" AR is pleased to present its readers with Mr. van Krimpen's ideas.

The purpose of the new container port of Aruba is not only to handle the own traffic of goods, but the intention is also to create a transit port for South America. In fact the container port is just one step of a much larger process. The reorganization of the port management of Aruba, which was a basic condition for the financing of the new port facilities, resulted in an independent management arrangement for the ports. The latter was an absolute necessity in order to strengthen the economic significance of the port activities within the Aruban economic constellation.

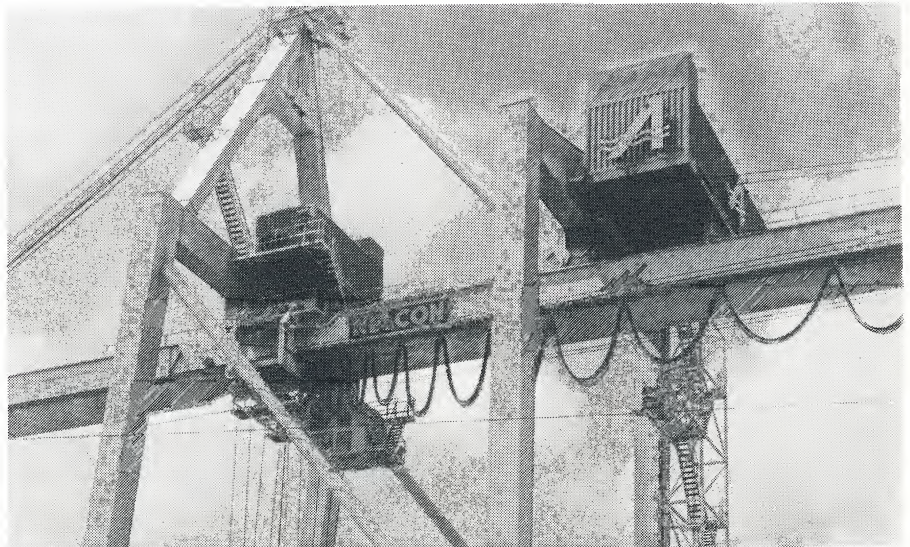
The last few years the entire port management has had but one goal, i.e. the general upgrading in all its aspects of the port facilities of Oranjestad and Barcadera. For it would have been an adverse asset to maintain the existing ports in a seriously neglected state and concentrate only on the new container port. This is the reason why the Aruba Ports Authority has invested a huge amount of money to bring the existing port back to a normal level of maintenance. The prospects are that by the middle of 1984 all Aruban ports will be improved to such extent that they can compete with foreign ports. At that time Aruba will have the disposal of all necessary equipment to handle containers, break-bulk and bulk cargo. The port of Oranjestad is eventually destined for container ships, ships with conventional cargo, passenger ships and bunker ships. Barcadera handles bulk cargo and has the disposal of the necessary grounds to

establish port related industries. It is here that in the future companies will be located which will back-up the oil drilling activities in the vicinity of Aruba. It is expected that the search for oil will start soon after the 'status aparte' has taken effect. The port of Barcadera will play a major roll in those activities as a supply basis.

The importance of South America

The future of the ports of Aruba greatly depends on the economic development of the nearby South American continent. This dependency of Aruba on foreign

mon economic market comparable to the one in Europe. The essential question is whether this protectionist policy can be continued much longer. Two factors play an important role in this respect. First of all, a number of prominent South American countries are hovering on the edge of bankruptcy and depend on financing by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. It is a known fact that these institutions set forth very severe conditions to additional financing and that they consider a free commercial trade between South American countries and the rest of the world a particularly important condition for economic recup-



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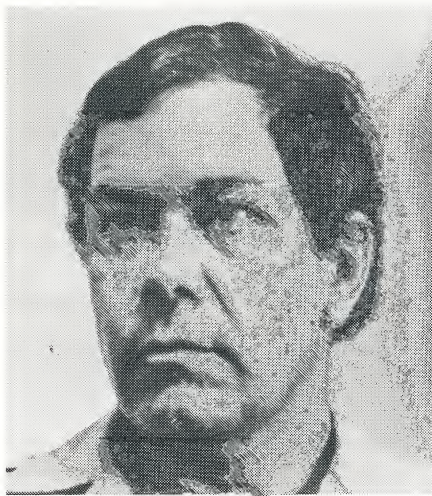
countries has recently been demonstrated painfully by the effects of the devaluation of the Bolivar. This dependency entails the necessity to create strong economic relationships with neighbouring South American countries such as Venezuela and Colombia. However, this is obviously not an easy task. Most of the South American countries have strict protectionist policies, which constitute the main obstacle to bring about a com-

eration. Further more, all South American countries try to considerably increase their export in order to produce foreign currency. This implies an inevitable change of their protectionist policies because the United States of America and Europe will only open their markets to South American goods, if these countries break down their trade restrictions imposed on American and European goods. ▶

Since the introduction in the early sixties of the container in the transportation industry, the importance of container transport has continuously increased. It all begun as an innovative shipping technique. Later on containerization, however, became a vital part of international commerce. Because of its cost efficiency it is one of the most important factors to be taken into account by countries which want to compete on the world market. All industrialized nations have adapted their ports to container traffic at the cost of enormous investments. This, however, resulted in comparably extreme high prices for loading and unloading of conventional break-bulk ships in these ports when collated with container handling. A general cargo ship of 10.000 dwt needs a port time of at least 5 days, while a cellular container vessel discharges the same amount of cargo in less than one day. The general cargo vessel requires up to 125 stevedores whereas the container vessel only needs 15 stevedores. So if the South American countries wish to compete on oversea markets, it is evident that they will have to switch over to the use of containers. Until now only few South American and Central American countries have the disposal of relatively few port facilities which are capable of handling containers. To name an example: Argentina shipped in 1978 the same amount of cargo in containers as Aruba did. Nowadays the containerized cargo volume has somewhat increased. The projected container terminal in Buenos Aires will be capable of handling ca. 80.000 TEU (20 feet equivalent containers). The Aruban container terminal could handle a similar quantity after some re-adjustment of the port equipment. This clearly illustrates the early stage of containerization in South and Central America. However, notwithstanding the actual economic problems, the containerization continues in South America. In addition many products of the South American continent such as tobacco, cotton, coffee and meat, are now being transported in containers.

Transshipment

It should be realized that it will take many years before the South American ports have been adjusted to containerization. Not only the necessity of huge capital investments hamper this evolution, but the social consequences are also very



Chris van Krimpen

radical. Large numbers of stevedores will become superfluous. An acceptable alternative will have to be created for them. Furthermore the big South American (government owned) shipping companies are not yet willing to stimulate container transport. This for the reason that they recently invested heavily in conventional ships which have only limited possibilities when it comes down to container transport. A rapid introduction of the container is feared to create fierce competition by the large Western shipping companies which all operate with large and ultra modern container ships. The chance of loosing this struggle is not at all unlikely. In the end however the container will systematically conquer the South American continent. The accommodation of

ports and shipping companies will develop very slowly because of financial and social problems. This will increase the demand for cheap transit ports for outgoing cargo. It is very likely that large cost effective effects will be obtained, if containers from South America are transshipped at Aruba on larger American, Japanese and European container ships which regularly call at our island.

Time schedule

On Wednesday, November 16th last, the new gantry crane which is installed at the new container quay, unloaded the first container. It was a Sealand container from the ship named "Meteor". This event initiated a new period for the Aruban port. The last phase of the project such as the workshop for the technical departments will be ready by the middle of 1984. Meanwhile, the new container terminal will gradually become operative. The APA crane operator Rubin Dubero and a Dutch instructor from the famous Europe Container Terminal at Rotterdam, are training a group of Aruban crane operators. Our new 140-ton mobile P&H crane will be operational in the beginning of next year and a new container freight station is now under construction. Next year Aruba will have the disposal of a professionally equipped container terminal (30 acres) and 650 meters of quay. APA continuously strives towards improvement of organization and efficiency in close cooperation with the Aruba Stevedoring Company. ■



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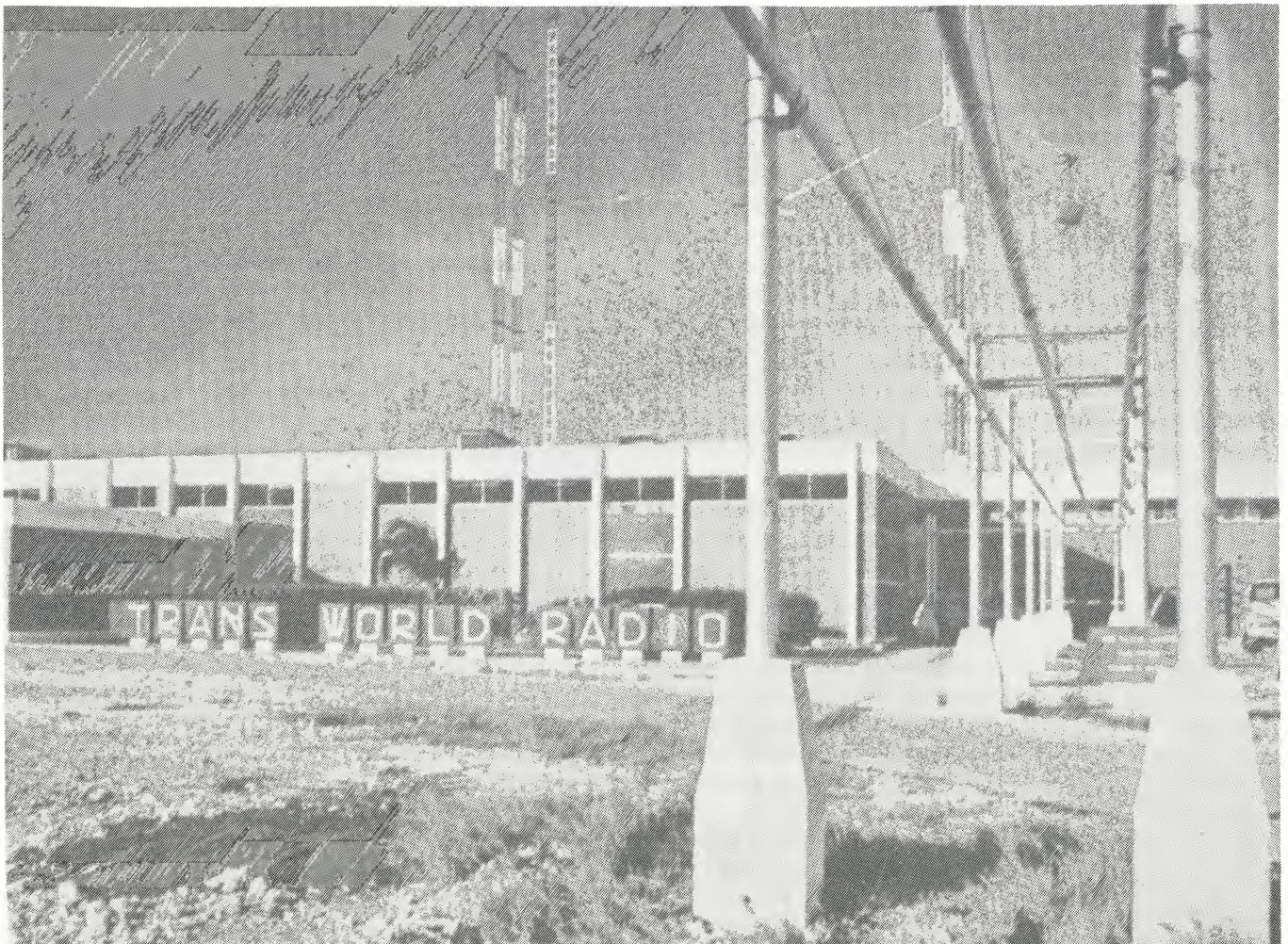
by *Hubert Linkels*

The soon to be realized establishment of a first FM radio station on Bonaire might create the impression that the flamingo island still finds itself in a rather backward position as regards the electronic media, in particular the radio. Millions of listeners all over the world, however, would immediately brand such a suggestion as a gross misconception. On the contrary, although probably only a relatively small number of people around the globe would be able to point out the island on the map, for countless men and women the name 'Bonaire' has had for many years both a beloved and familiar sound. This for the reason that they receive much of their information and in particular spiritual guidance through radio programmes transmitted from Bonaire.

The island hosts two of the strongest transmitting stations in the entire world. First of all there are the huge masts of *Radio Nederland Wereld Omroep* broadcasting programmes related to the Netherlands and prepared in Hilversum (Holland), to Latin- and North America, the Caribbean, Africa, New Zealand and Au-

stralia. In an earlier issue AR informed its readers more extensively about RNWO. Secondly the (non-commercial) *Trans World Radio Foundation (TWR)* chose Bonaire as its base for transmitting religious and cultural programmes to millions of listeners all over the world. The foundation, which has many offices in the USA and abroad, is being directed from Chatham, New Jersey, by Mr. George Cooper. Its installations in Bonaire are the largest in the Northern hemisphere!

Every morning when Don Beans gives the ▶



OK signal the two 45 ton, 16 cylinder Alco diesel engines are started up and TWR bringing God's word to 80% of the world's population is on the air. "Bon Bini (meaning welcome) this is Trans World Radio transmitting from the flamingo island Bonaire" can then be heard in more than twenty different languages in almost every corner of the earth. This greeting has been heard from the very first day that TWR founder Paul E. Freed started transmitting from the Caribbean. Thus *Bonaire* has become a most familiar sound to millions.

Mr. Freed, who as a youngster went to school in Jerusalem and Beirut and later on studied philosophy in New York, founded in 1952 a religious organisation called 'International Evangelism', the predecessor of TWR.

His first programmes were broadcasted from Tangers, Morocco. Shortly afterwards the Moroccan government nationalized the station. Paul Freed, who knew himself called to radio evangelism, then managed to raise the funds to build the strongest radio transmitter in the world, which today broadcasts in more than 80 languages, amongst which such exotic tongues as Nama, Ndebele, Pedi, Tshwa, Ovambo, Umbundu and Xhosa.

Construction

The Foundation TWR has stations in Monte Carlo, Swaziland, Cyprus, Guam and Sri Lanka. But best known is the station on Bonaire, which is on the air 219 hours per week. Apart from programmes in the above mentioned languages and many more there are 70 hours of broadcast in Spanish, 50 hours in Portugese, 60 hours in English, 11 in German and 10 in Russian.

Planning the station Puerto Rico was a first choice. But only two frequencies being available Reed looked further around in the Caribbean. Dutch multinational Philips drew his attention to the Netherlands Antilles, in particular Curaçao. A meeting was arranged with the Minister of Education and Culture, Mr. I.C. Debrot, who immediately realized the implied promotion possibilities for the Antilles. Mr. Debrot moved fast and within two weeks Reed was given the official green light to start building his station. Many of the larger electronic com-

panies in Holland, Germany, Switzerland and the USA showed interest with regard to the construction of what was to be the most powerful station hitherto built in the world. The order was granted to Continental Electronics from Dallas, Texas, because of its experience in constructing high masts in the USA, Japan and Germany.

A few weeks before the actual work was to begin Mr. Reed visited Bonaire. When he saw the saltponds at the southern end of the island surrounded by the Caribbean sea, he realized that he had found an even more ideal spot for long range transmitting than Curaçao could offer. He had in the meantime run into problems in Curaçao, as the plant's location appeared to be too near to the airport and therefore possibly hazardous for in- and outbound flights. All the more reason to decide to change his plans and build on Bonaire. The Curaçao government cooperated and in September 1963 the construction of the masts, offices and studios was started.

In spite of extensive preparations and the employment of first class expertise the construction of a 760 ft. high mast proved almost impossible because of the strong trade-winds. When the 100 ft. level was reached the American construction workers became so scared that they refused to continue the work. Only after a new crew (from Asia) had been brought in could the work be finished. On February 25, 1964 the transmitting station was officially inaugurated in the presence of Princess Beatrix, now Queen of the Netherlands.

The Word

TWR's objectives are purely evangelistic. All its employees consider themselves missionaries of the gospel. The permanent staff of the Bonaire station numbers 50 families, of which 169 persons are directly involved in the station's activities. The group is highly international and many of its members are, besides missionaries of the word, experts of the kind a radio station needs for its daily operation. TWR-Bonaire is, moreover, used as a training-school for young men and women who wish to devote their lives to radio-evangelism.

The employees depend for their income on contributions by the faithful in the USA and elsewhere in the world. A problem they regularly run into is that most people still have very pre-concieved and in fact old-fashioned ideas about the missionary profession. Said Laurie Lind from North Dakota when visiting Bonaire: "I found most of them living in comfortable homes, driving cars, eating hot dogs and shopping in supermarkets. At first this bothered me. Where was the proverbial foresaking all and following Jesus? But Dan Canfield f.e. travels yearly to the Brazilian interior to visit the listeners of TWR's Portugese programmes, whose only valuable possession is often a small transistor radio. Many of the poorest along the Amazone are TWR's most loyal audience.

Feed back

Mr. Debrot's insight that the establishment of TWR on one of the islands would also do much to promote that island, has been proven right. Not only do many letters from all over the world indicate a high level of appreciation for TWR's programmes, many of them contain questions about the island itself. Those letters (averaging 40 a week) are passed on to the Bonaire Tourist Office, which sends the authors the required information. TWR itself takes a direct share in informing people about the Flamingo island. In particular Bob Ketchersid, who with his wife Judy takes care of the programme *Caribbean Nite Call*, often besides preaching the gospel devotes time to informing his audience about the attractions Bonaire offers the tourist.

Thus it may be concluded that TWR not only uses its 5000 kilowatts for the spiritual welfare of mankind, but also makes known the island which for almost 20 years has been its friendly home. ■

EXPORT SUCCESS

by Nancy Siegenthaler

From an unpretentious, unmarked building in Otrabanda, one local exporter is reveling in the sweet smell of success. He is Mr. G.A. van Loon, Founder of the R.J. van der Sar, N.V. company, which manufactures a super-fragrant disinfectant called Floralin. Floralin is on the shelves of supermarkets throughout the Caribbean and it will soon be sold in the United States as well. The company's sales of the disinfectant have been growing at an annual rate of 300%, and the demand, at times, still outstrips supply.

Scent

Van Loon refers to his company as a "small fish in a big pond", saying the first year's profits were a modest 4,150,000., but he nevertheless feels compelled to level off the yearly 300% growth rate in order to steady production.

Van Loon's remarkable success in selling the disinfectant comes as a result of some homework in marketing strategy. While disinfectants from multi-national corporations have always been available here, van Loon said the Caribbean market demanded instead, a disinfectant that left something other than a strong, industrial-cleaner-type smell.

"It's an ethnic thing, really", he said. "People here like fragrances. It's an important element in their lives. From the day we started making this", he said, "the sales just took off."

Targeting the Hispanic market as potential buyers when he began experimenting with fragrances in 1975, van Loon, a pharmaceutical wholesaler, started with a standard baby powder. He added to it a pleasant, long-lasting scent, and tested it on the market. Sales, he said, went through the ceiling.

Encouraged, he continued experimenting with different scents for a powerful, hard-surface cleaner. He set-

led on the formula for Floralin in 1978, and sales have persistently mounted.

Export

Floralin may well be the most visible export product from the Netherlands Antilles. From his plant in Aruba, van Loon exports from between 900 to 1400 cases of Floralin a week to Trinidad, Barbados, St. Martin, St. Vincent, Haiti, and the French islands. Sometime next year, he will begin exporting Floralin to the growing Hispanic centers of Florida, New York, and Chicago. It is being sold through distributors and licensees.

"We've penetrated a lot of markets", said van Loon. "But it's a matter of marketing whether or not the product will be successful.

"The product must be unique. This isn't made elsewhere -- it's a specialty item. There is nothing from the United States to compete with this. Some other companies (in the Netherlands Antilles)

are protected by their own home market, but they are tied to it. They can't export because the competition would eat them up. They can only sell to their own home market."

Competition from such multinational giants as Lever Brothers and Proctor & Gamble, said van Loon, is precisely what the small exporter is up against, for ordinary household products.

"Any company, to be successful", he said, "has to have a specialty product."

Costs

R.J. van der Sar's modest costs also help buoy it up. The freight, estimated at the value-per-cubic foot, is compatible with the company's success.

"If our product in a (container) trailer is worth \$20,000., and if the freight is \$1,500. to \$3,000., we can hack that", said van Loon.

The popular notion in the Antilles that most exports from here are transhipped ▶



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to Miami is groundless, according to van Loon.

"We have a lot of good shipping connections", he said. "We use Kingline and the West Indian Shipping Company (WISCO). We ship direct to Barbados, Trinidad and St. Martin, and we transship to Santo Domingo. There's connections galore."

Import duties in most Caribbean countries are not prohibitive either, he said, and the French islands import Floralin duty-free, since they are a member of the European Economic Community (EEC). And although President Reagan's Caribbean Basin Initiative is not yet applicable, van Loon said Floralin will also get preferential tariffs when it is sent to the United States' markets.

In addition, there is not duty on goods leaving the free zones of the Netherlands Antilles.

But the greatest cost-cutting concession of all, he said, is the Antilles' ten year tax holiday, which his company qualified for, and which gives it a decidedly profitable edge. The only tax the company pays is the property tax for its Aruban plant. Labor costs for the company's ten em-



C.A. van Loon

ployees does not get in the way of continued, healthy profits, and van Loon took no bank loans to get Floralin off to a profitable start.

Advertising through the Caribbean is inexpensive, too, according to van Loon, who uses television as Floralin's only medium. In Bermuda, for example, the company pays only \$25.00 for a 60-second spot.

US-market

Floralin's pervasiveness in the Caribbean led to inquiries about the product from United States markets, but 'jumping

into' the United States with a hot, new product is not easy, according to van Loon. Because Floralin is a disinfectant, approval from such federal agencies such as the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) are required, because disinfectants fall in the broad category of pesticides. To get around the EPA's obstructive paperwork, van Loon said, Floralin will be marketed in the United States markets as a 'floral cleaner', rather than as a disinfectant.

Nevertheless, entry into the United States is still laborious, for conformity in packaging is also required. For the Florida, New York, Chicago and Los Angeles markets, polystyrene bottles that do not discolor and special, child-proof caps are indispensable.

But the sight of Floralin on the supermarket shelves will only help remind shoppers what their noses already know, according to van Loon, who manages three other businesses besides manufacturing the disinfectant.

"Floralin is a growing concern", he said. "The secret to its success is the marketing. There's really no other word for it." ■

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FIRST STEP TOWARDS NEW CONSTITUTIONAL TIES ?

The difference in approach is striking. Aruba fought its battle for independence almost exclusively at the conference table. Hardly any practical preparations for the 'status aparte' which will commence on January 1, 1986 have as yet been undertaken. Not so the Windward Islands: St. Maarten, Saba and St. Eustatius. They never clamored for a special status within the kingdom. But now that Aruba is virtually leaving the Antillean constellation and independence of Curaçao is no longer a far-off possibility, the Windwarders have begun to weigh their own future options. Instead of sitting down for endless rounds of negotiations, however, they have chosen for the very pragmatic approach of *trial and error*. And even more remarkable, in a decidedly un-Caribbean fashion they are looking far ahead and beyond their own shores.

Call for cooperation

During recent years the three small islands, located six hundred miles north of Curaçao, followed the traditional Caribbean path leading to disintegration. Governed by one legislative body situated in St. Maarten, the two smallest partners Saba and St. Eustatius (each with about one thousand inhabitants) demanded their own. During this year each of the three islands begot its own island—council and lieutenant—governor. But hardly had these institutions been established or voices were raised calling for closer cooperation.

Well-known Saban politician Will Johnson presented his island's council late November with an extensive plan for establishing a *federation* of the five Antillean islands (the present Netherlands Antilles minus Aruba). In his concept the federation would count three member states: Curaçao, Bonaire and the Windwards(!), each with its own parliament, council of ministers and prime-minister. Interestingly enough, Mr. Johnson thereby re-introduces one legislative body for the three Windward islands. He takes care in his proposal to safeguard the autonomy of each of the islands but nevertheless

suggests a measure of cooperation closer and probably more effective than before. As far as the spirit of his ideas is concerned, the plan was well received. In political circles on St. Maarten, however, few appeared in favour of creating once more one legislative body, be it differently structured than the one just left behind. There should be no return to the past, it is felt

Another aspect of Mr. Johnson's proposal did on the other hand receive much attention and appreciation. In his letter to the Saban Island Council he also forwards the idea of closer ties with the French part of St. Maarten, St. Barths (also French) and British Anguilla. In particular Mr. Claude Wathey, for thirty years the most influential politician in the Windwards, agreed to exploring this aspect more fully.

Evading constitutional hindrances

Considering the fact that the above mentioned territories each have constitutional ties with different European powers (England, France and the Netherlands) the idea of closer cooperation might easily and prematurely be strangled by tedious legislative processes in order to get approval for even the smallest step in that direction. Recognizing that very real problem plans are presently developed to establish regular *informal* consultations between representatives of the territories involved, to see if joined policies can be drawn up with

regard to tourism, air connections and public health. The advantage of such an approach would be that in the case of agreement on any issue, the respective legislative bodies could then decide accordingly, thus assuring coordination. The stage of formal negotiations would only be reached if and when the viability of cooperation had been proven.

Moving ahead


AR learned from reliable sources that agreement has been reached behind the scenes about the appointment of a committee to get this informal process of consultations off the ground. One implication, it should be realized, is that the Windward Islands are beginning to explore alternatives to an Antilles of the Five. What should also be realized is that history, geography, the social web of family relations and the large measure of common interest, all point logically in the direction now tentatively taken. But that is also true of other parts of the Caribbean, where instead peoples have been drifting away from each other rather than closer. The ABC islands are the most up to date example of that phenomenon so typical of the region. The very pragmatic approach of the Windwarders should therefore be appreciated for its down to earthness and may for that very same reason well prove to be successful. ■

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Economic Survey

by H. C. Beers

Introduction

The balance of payments prospects for 1983 are very gloomy. At mid October foreign reserves with the Central Bank and the banks reached a level of f. 300 million, resulting in a net outflow of f. 91 million since the end of last year. Although during the coming months large revenues from offshore taxes are expected, for 1983 a record deficit of about f. 100 million may be expected. The central government met financial difficulties; the minister of Finance decided to surpass the limit of the credit facility with the Central Bank. Instead of the announced f. 12 million the facility has been overdrawn by f. 20 million to a balance of f. 110 million. Besides treasury paper and government bonds to a total amount of f. 228 million were outstanding.

Lago Aruba told its personnel that Venezuela has been reducing deliveries of crude oil from 300,000 barrels to 210,000 barrels per day. The possibility exists that the refinery has to curtail its activities as a result of this lower volume.

Shell Curaçao recorded a small profit in the third quarter, but continued to cut on operational expenses. A neutral committee confirmed this policy.

The Curaçao Drydock was able to reach an agreement to reduce staff costs by 23 percent. The operational losses until October amount to f. 28 million.

Foreign Reserves

The outflow of foreign exchange continued during the last months. At mid October the Central Bank held a net amount of f. 254 million and the private deposit banks f. 47 million, making a total of f. 301 million, which is the same as the end of 1981: the surplus of 1982 had disappeared completely. With only a couple of months to go the prospects are dim for 1983. A record deficit seems inevitable; the amount might exceed f. 100 million, proceeding from the worst developments possible.

Usually the months of October and November show decreases in the level of foreign exchange reserves, whereas in December, as a result of the start of the tourist season, a net inflow is recorded. Due to the tremendous devaluation of the Venezuelan Bolivar this pattern has changed, the island of Curaçao being the one that was hit hardest. The Bolivar revenues have disappeared. In previous years these amounted to more than f. 150 million annually. This decrease in tourism will also result in a

change in imports, but the net effect can hardly be estimated. The trade sector normally imports the tourist-related merchandise in the fall.

The deterioration of the foreign exchange reserves are illustrated in the following table (amounts f. million):

foreign reserves increase in:	quarter:	
	III	IV
1981	87	22
1982	160	33
1983	16	—

It is hard to estimate the fourth quarter outcome. The month of October recorded a deficit of about f. 40 million. The results of November and December depend for a great part of the profit taxes paid by the so-called offshore companies. In September the Department of Taxes distributed profit tax assessments for several years that were in arrears to an amount of f. 100 million, which has to be paid within 2 months. Although this amount cannot be collected entirely within the stipulated period, the expected revenues of about f. 70 million will have a favourable influence

on the fourth quarter result.

Balance of Payments

The Central Bank released the figures of the balance of payments for the first half of 1983. The overall deficit amounted to f. 69 million, mainly caused by a deficit in current payments. Less proceeds from transportation and in particular from tourism accounted for this deficit. The less income from transportation was mainly caused by decreasing activities of ship repair and maintenance.

During the first half of 1982 an income of f. 69 million had been recorded compared with an amount of f. 29 million during the corresponding period of 1983. The fall in proceeds from tourism was caused by developments in Curaçao. During the first half of 1982 Curaçao recorded a net inflow of f. 88 million. This plunged to a mere f. 11 million in 1982. In particular the second quarter accounted for this setback, when on a net basis, tourism for the first time showed a negative figure of f. 11 million, meaning that residents spent more abroad for holidays (f. 37 million) than foreign tourists on Curaçao (f. 26 million).

Government transfers mainly consist of revenues from profit taxes paid by offshore companies, which paid f. 140 million against f. 111 million in the corresponding period of 1982. The high amount is partly due to government efforts to collect the backlog in taxes.

The capital flows were almost in balance, whereas in previous years a deficit was recorded. The change resulted from less investments made by residents in foreign securities and higher proceeds from loans raised abroad. However, the conclusion drawn from these circumstances that less capital is leaving the economy to be invested abroad is premature. Especially taking into account the increased outflow due to tourism and private remittances, mainly comprising transfers of wages.

Public Finance

The island governments of both Aruba and Curaçao published their budgets for 1984. Aruba recored an overall deficit of f. 45 million. The current and capital account stated deficits of f. 20 million and f. 25 million ▶

respectively.

Current expenses amounted to f. 271 million, whereas current income reached a level of f. 251 million. The capital account showed f. 50 million for expenses and only f. 25 million as income. The less favourable performance by Lago Aruba, as compared with the previous three years, has affected the financial situation of the island government, which has proposed several measures to reduce expenses.

The Curaçao budget showed current income of f. 599 million, or an increase of f. 118 million compared with 1983, resulting in a surplus of f. 63 million in the current account. The capital account closed with a deficit of f. 92 million. The island government indicated the possibility not to realize all capital projects.

The Central Government is facing seemingly unsurmountable financial problems. The growth rate of expenditures has been much higher than of revenues. In 1983 revenues, including net transfers from the island governments, are expected to amount to f. 414 million and expenditures f. 434 million after taking some measures. If the expenditure policy had not been changed, the deficit would have amounted to f. 45 million. However, further measures are necessary.

For 1984 expenditures may be expected to keep soaring, while existing revenues will level off. The payroll deserves the highest priority. Wages have shown an increase of more than 70 percent in four years despite a personnel stop decreed in 1979. Interest payments will climb due to increased borrowing.

If the Central government maintains its present spending pattern a budget deficit of between f. 50 and f. 90 million may be expected for 1984.

However, it will be hardly possible, to finance such a deficit. The government has already issued f. 228 million in treasury notes and bonds on the domestic market at the end of September. It is to be doubted whether the banks and institutional investors are willing to take additional amounts. In view of the severe problems in financing present deficits, the Central Government has decided to surpass the f. 90 million ceiling which existed on its advance account with the Central Bank. Initially, permission was granted by the Minister of Finance to overdraw the limit by f. 12 million, but at the end of October it has been surpassed by f. 20 million.

The financial possibilities will be put at a test during the coming months. In the period November 1983-January 1984 an amount of 45 million in treasury pa-

per will mature. It will be interesting to see how and to what extent this amount can be refinanced.

Banking Sector

Bank of America announced that it will cease its activities in the Netherlands Antilles. It will sell the local branch office on Curaçao to Bank of Boston, which apparently is enlarging its network in the Caribbean. The approval of the local authorities, such as the Central Bank, has not yet been granted. The deal was explained to improve services to the clients.

The liquidity position of the local banks fell mainly as a consequence of the balance of payments deficit. At the end of October the banks maintained balances to a total amount of f. 23 million with the Central Bank, compared with f. 65 million a year ago. The banks also borrow more frequently from the Central Bank, mainly on security of treasury paper. Mid October these borrowings amounted to f. 5.3 million, which was repaid in full at the end of the month.

Another explanation of the reduced liquidity position was given by one of the bankers who said that during the last seven months more credits were granted to the business sector to finance losses.

In view of the balance of payments deficit the banks agreed with the Central Bank to reduce consumer credit extension. No detail were revealed.

Although a further drain of foreign exchange may be reduced by this agreement, and as such may add to an improvement of the balance of payments outcome, it is not a solution. The deficit was not created by the import of merchandise.

Inflation

During the first half of 1983 inflation on the islands Aruba, Bonaire and Curaçao stayed at the very low level of 1.3 percent or an unadjusted 2.6 percent per year. The consumer price index rose 0.3 percent in June to 101.3 percent. Increases were recorded in the categories clothing, housing, transportation and communication as well as miscellaneous, against less expenses for furniture.

In July the inflation rate accelerated to 0.5 percent or at an unadjusted annual pace of 6 percent. Food, clothing and transportation appeared to be more expensive; only the costs of recreation and education decreased.

It is not expected that inflation during the remaining period of 1983 will stay at the low level of the first half. The government measures to increase the excise duties on gasoline and the foreign exchange tax will certainly raise the cost of living as will the announced government intention to increase the excise duties on liquor and tobacco, as well as the profit tax, which in part will be passed on to the consumers. Besides the government considers a further increase of the excise duty on gasoline and maybe of the foreign exchange tax, as well as import duties on luxury goods.

Lago Aruba

The Lago management held a meeting for its 1200 workers to explain the present difficult situation.

Since March Lago Venezuela has reduced daily crude deliveries from 300,000 barrels to 210,000 barrels. The reduction resulted from the OPEC agreement to reduce oil production. To fulfil current contractual obligation Lago is processing crude oil from the Middle East. However, no profit is made on such refining.

If Venezuela continues to deliver only 200,000 barrels, the management intends to adjust the refinery to such a volume. This means closing some units and cutting down the staff as well as economizing on the services of (sub) contractors to control operational expenses. The number of personnel to be laid off has not yet been decided, but a total of 150 to 200 persons was deemed possible, not including those who will retire nor those employed by contractors..

The decisions will be taken in December after the elections in Venezuela and when the study currently being prepared by Lago will be finished. It is not to be expected that a new agreement will be reached on the volume of crude oil from Venezuela before the presidential elections.

Shell Curaçao

After the proposals of the government mediator for labour disputes appeared unacceptable to the labour unions, the management announced effective 1 October several measures to curtail operational expenditure, in particular staff expenses. The full indexation of wages for inflation was abolished for all personnel including expatriates, local and other employees.

Furthermore the vacation allowance ▶

FINANCE

of 8 percent was suspended. The measure did not come unexpectedly. Since April Shell Curaçao has been trying to reduce expenses by 20 percent in order to restore profitability.

The Minister of Labour Affairs appointed a neutral committee to evaluate the financial position of Shell Curaçao and the consequences on its future.

The committee confirmed in its report, which was published in the beginning of November, the intentions of the Shell management. In order to survive negotiations with the Venezuelan oil company Maraven, a reduction of expenses and new investments are essential. The management agreed to reopen negotiations on a new labour agreement on the basis of the report. The labour union, however, still seems reluctant to make any sacrifices.

Curaçao Drydock

The Dutch government agreed to grant a total of f. 10.5 million as development aid to the Curaçao Drydock Company. However, it is not meant as a subsidy. The Drydock has to be reorganized in order to make the company profitable again. In November the first instalment of the financial aid to an amount of f. 4.5 million will be paid. Each quarter, starting January 1984, the developments must be evaluated. If no satisfactory progress can be shown the Dutch government will stop further payments.

Until September the Drydock suffered a loss of f. 24 million or f. 3 million per month as an average. No company can survive under these circumstances. As the payroll takes more than half the operational expenditure, the new manager proposed a package aimed at a substantial reduction of staff expenses.

The management will implement the package in consultation with its personnel and the labour unions.

At the end of October the management reached an agreement on a reduction of personnel costs by 23 percent. The employees agreed to waive holiday allowances, christmas bonus and pension premiums. Besides working time will be reduced by 3 percent and overtime will be compensated by spare time instead of payments.

Furthermore about 100 workers will be laid-off.

In September there was a loss of f. 4 million. The management expects that the annual loss will not exceed f. 36

Table 1

External cash flow January/June; f. millions.			
	1983	1982	1981
merchandise	- 732.7	- 755.7	- 652.3
transportation	99.2	139.5	152.2
tourism	250.9	336.5	359.1
investment income	- 2.3	9.1	- 33.7
private remittances	- 63.9	- 49.4	- 42.1
government transfers	151.8	119.0	63.7
oil refineries			
remittances	163.5	152.7	112.9
other payments	51.4	57.1	47.5
balance current payments	- 82.1	8.8	7.3
private capital	- 36.4	- 60.2	- 66.6
government capital	34.4	5.4	43.6
balance capital flows	- 2.0	- 54.8	- 23.0
errors and omissions	15.0	9.7	3.5
change reserves	- 69.1	- 36.3	- 12.2

Table 2

Condensed balance sheet Central Bank; f. millions				
end of:	Oct. '83	Sept. '83	Aug. '83	July '83
assets:				
gold stock	41.4	41.4	41.4	41.4
foreign reserves	263.0	289.3	312.2	367.9
loans to:				
- fed. government	109.7	110.0	108.2	99.4
- banks	--	--	--	0.3
- others	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
sundry assets	5.9	6.0	5.7	5.4
TOTAL	421.0	447.7	468.5	515.4
Liabilities:				
banknotes	170.4	171.2	168.1	177.7
deposits held by:				
- tax collector	4.2	3.9	5.8	4.0
- island governments	110.5	128.2	135.4	151.0
- banks	22.6	28.2	47.3	64.8
- development projects	7.0	14.0	6.8	18.4
- other residents	21.0	19.6	21.3	18.4
- non residents	1.8	2.0	2.4	3.2
money in custody	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1
sundry liabilities	17.6	14.7	15.5	12.0
Capital and reserves	63.8	63.8	63.8	63.8

million. The Drydock has curtailed its prices for ship repair and maintenance drastically, so that revenues are very low.

However, according to the manage-

ment the emphasis at the moment is on attracting work.

When activities have reached a sufficient level the prices will be increased again.

THE EMBATTLED CAUSE OF PRESS FREEDOM IN THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE

NETH. ANTILLES A RARE EXCEPTION

In a few cases the verdict is brief, straightforward and unambiguous: "There is no freedom of the press". The sentence appears four times in the latest nation by nation report on press freedom of the Inter American Press Association, IAPA. Cuba, Haiti, Guyana and Uruguay, all four fully qualify for this most negative judgement. Describing the situation in the majority of countries on the American continent, the conclusion may be less severe, but still many pages are needed to put on record the numerous violations of and threats against the basic human right of freedom of expression. Only in two instances the document strikes a fully positive note. Puerto Rico and the Netherlands Antilles are mentioned as the rare exceptions in the Western Hemisphere.

Meeting in Lima, Peru, last October IAPA, of which most publishers of daily papers in the hemisphere are a member, took five days to scrutinize the plight of press freedom on the continent. The picture which evolved is worrisome, to say the least. Summing up the situation in general IAPA's incoming president Horacio Aguirre of Miami's *Diario Las*

Americas told the three hundred assembled delegates "freedom of expression is openly assaulted in some cases and greatly jeopardized in others. For some years now the attacks and threats not only come from well-known totalitarian, dictatorial or arbitrary regimes, but also from some democratic governments. A possible explanation of the latter contradiction in terminis, according to Aguirre, may be the ideological confusion which afflicts contemporary mankind. The fact that "under the protection of demagoguery", as he put it, "laws have been approved in democratic countries which maim or restrict freedom of expression even with the ironic excuse of protecting it" seems to prove him right. A confusion, IAPA feels, that is shrewdly fostered by powerful elements in UNESCO, which have introduced proposals such as:

Government-inspired measures for "democratization of communication" that would usurp editorial functions;
Governmentally imposed codes of conduct for the press;
Measures for "protection of journalists" that could restrict their freedom;
The recognition of "information sovereignty" which would restrict broadcasting of news across national borders without prior consent.

Seemingly in accordance with the identity quest of developing nations, the proposals stem from ideological concepts that are not only foreign to democracy but pose an immediate threat to it. Thus the struggle for freedom of expression in the Western hemisphere today is not only waged with blatantly repressive regimes, but also against anti-democratic forces dressed in sheep-clothes and appealing to a legitimate desire for an own cultural, social and national identity.

Peru

The location for IAPA's 39th General Assembly was aptly chosen. After years of subjection to a leftist oriented military dictatorship, Peru only recently re-embraced democracy. Said Alejandro Miro Quesada, publisher of Lima's prestigious *El Comercio* addressing the conference: "I sincerely believe that Peru's recent experience constitutes a landmark in the history of journalism in Latin America; for after having endured the harshest ordeal of injustice and subjugation, the Peruvian media were reborn in an environment of the purest freedom. ▶



President Belaude Terry at IAPA-Assembly

Rarely has a greater violation of freedom of expression been witnessed: the stealthy occupation and confiscation, backed by machine gun, of all the newspapers of national scope; expropriation of radio broadcasting stations and television channels; assembly of an iron-clad state apparatus to control information, advertizing, cinema, newsprint etc. — in short, all communication media and everything connected with them — in addition to draconian press laws. It looked as though the freedom of the press had disappeared forever in our country, but fortunately there were those who believed in its return, because they knew that it was a natural right, inherent to man, and that it would finally emerge triumphant.”



Quesada

Continued Mr. Miro Quesada: “The Peruvian experience, on the other hand, has served to demonstrate the error of those who do not know how to value the importance to a nation of its right of expression. Accordingly it was not merely a coincidence that the people’s first cries of protest against the military dictatorship were heard in Lima as a result of the seizure of the newspapers; nor that, with the return of democracy, the first matter to be taken up in the television panel on election day and the first declarations of the President elect (Mr. Belaunde Terry) referred to the restitution of the dailies and the return of press freedom.” Underlining Mr. Belaunde Terry’s deep attachment to the democratic ideals, Mr. Quesada quoted the incumbent President on that occasion: “I shall not sleep a single night in the Government Palace until the newspapers are returned to their legitimate owners and freedom of the the press is re-established.” And so, Mr. Quesada concluded, it effectively happened.

Analysis

In this atmosphere so congenial to its ideals IAPA sat down to analyze the situation of the press country by country and to determine what action could be taken to counteract the repressive forces in the region.

One group of countries did certainly not take much of the assembly’s time for the simple reason that nothing had changed since IAPA met last. Marxism has, contrary to its promises, precluded all evolution in every society where it was forced upon the people as an exclusive ideology. Cuba is a prime example in the Western hemisphere. Primarily for the sake of keeping its vigilance on par and to show its deep-felt solidarity with journalists like Luis Rodriquez and Fernando Rivas, who have been in jail for more than 20 years, the assembly listened respectfully to a 30 minute report on that country. The exercise proved to be a sobering experience. In Cuba, it was stated, there is no freedom of the press because there is no press, only government propaganda. Any printed text, whether it be a primary school book, a medical brochure or even a poem, is carefully scrutinized and controlled. Live television does not exist; everything has to be taped ahead for the sake of censorship. Even sports programmes, which are allegedly live, are broadcast with up to a minute’s delay to allow time for interruption.

The conference learned with dismay that UNESCO has offered to subsidize a programme of the Latin American Journalists’ Federation, which heartily endorses marxism, to inform “journalists with proposals about the ideological penetration resulting from the transfer of technology”. For this purpose an Institute of Journalism has been opened in Havana in order to ‘inform’ young journalists from the Caribbean and Central America. Commented outgoing IAPA president Andres Garcia Lavin: “This does not make sense at all: to have an Institute of Journalism where there is no press”. An observation which not only reflects on the nature of Cuban society but also on UNESCO, which apparently has left the discussion-table and moved on to action with the Americas as its field of experimentation.

Early during the conference Grenada was defined as belonging to the above

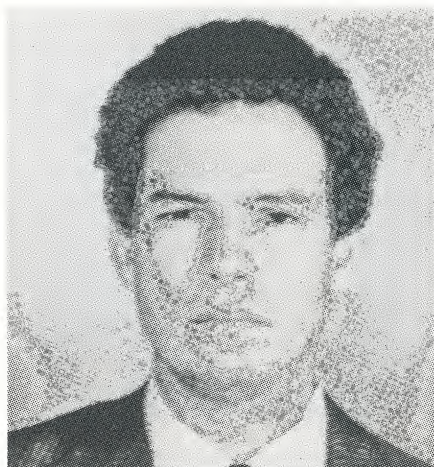


Clark

mentioned group. Only days before the assembly met, a message had been sent to the military junta, which replaced the regime of Mr. Bishop, asking for guarantees with regard to Mr. Alestar Hughes, a journalist whose fate at that time was unknown. Right in the middle of the conference the intervention of six Caribbean states with the help of the USA took place and it was learned that Mr. Hughes was safe and sound. The intervention itself was not commented upon officially by IAPA. Most delegates, however, expressed in private their approval of the action. All Caribbean publishers present were unanimous in their appraisal. Said Mr. Oliver Clark of Jamaica’s Daily Gleaner: “The situation in Grenada had become so disastrous that it necessitated an intervention by the other Caribbean nations.”

Protest

Most of the assembly’s time was taken up by reports from countries that in principle confess to the right of free expression, but which in fact curtail that right by special laws or repressive government measures. Reported Mr. Lavin about the organization’s activities in the past year: “It is regrettable to point out that far from settling down and broadening the realm of democratic and liberation ideas in our continent, the attacks have manifested themselves more frequently and are more brutal. We sent 36 messages of protest to Heads of State or Government of 23 countries where there were violations of the freedom of the press during the past 12 months, among which were Argentina, the Dominican Republic, Paraguay, Bolivia, Uruguay, Panama, Nicaragua, Colombia and Guyana.”



Chamorro

With regard to Central America special attention was given to the situation in Nicaragua, where prior censorship was instituted two years ago and 20 independent news broadcasting stations were closed. The present Junta's furor seems especially directed against "La Prensa" the paper which so courageously opposed Somoza and was pivotal in bringing about the dictator's downfall. Its adherence to objective principles of journalism and democratic ideals are apparently felt as a threat to the credibility of Mr. Ortega and his colleagues in the junta. The paper is daily plagued by excessive censorship and even worse by threats directed against its personnel. On several occasions dur-

ing the past year La Prensa was forced to close down by the officials. In other instances the paper itself decided not to publish as a means of protest against the arbitrary ways of the censor and once because it was denied defence against vile attacks by that same office, which daily plays a dual role: that of judge and party. Mr. Pedro Joaquin Chamorro, director of la Prensa, told the assembled IAPA members that due to the junta's denial of any foreign currency to his paper needed to buy newsprint, the paper might have to close down early December by lack of paper. Developments in Grenada, as much as the fact that La Prensa's plight was made known internationally through IAPA, must be seen as the principle reasons behind the sudden change of policy late November of Nicaragua's Government towards La Prensa, allowing it to acquire newsprint and granting the paper a larger measure of editorial freedom.

In South America Uruguay heads the list of countries violating the human right of expression. Last August the government decreed the prohibition of dissemination of information on political activities, adding to the already existent restrictions enforced since June 1973, giving wide discretionary powers to the authorities for controlling the press. In Paraguay government provisions are in force hindering or preventing broadcasting stations and newspapers from exercising freedom of information and opinion, while several journalists were expelled from the country and others are in prison without justifiable cause or legal trial. Although Chili's military rulers flitted the "state of emergency" authorizing the imposition of administrative sanctions on the press, the situation is still far from satisfactory.

Threats

In Columbia threats to newspapers have come from unexpected quarters. An issue of El Espectador that detailed the background of a well-known drug trafficker was seized by his followers in Medellin. Three journalists of the Associated Dailies chain were recently murdered. Although the motives behind those killings have not been elucidated by the courts, there is strong suspicion of underworld involvement. A new trend in Columbia is the constant accusation against newspapers for a crime that a new law vaguely describes as insult and slander.

But "disclosing facts about the private lives of individuals or corporations which may harm them" does not differentiate clearly between news and malicious rumor.

Reports from most South American countries reflect a climate of restriction and often personal danger for working journalists.

USA

Turning to North America IAPA joined US news organizations in condemning the administration's attempt to censor government information. The plan to impose by contract on more than 100,000 civilian employees a restrictive and cumbersome clearance policy on release of information, is viewed as constituting a clear danger of prior constraint in violation of the spirit of the First Amendment. The administration's intention to extend this pre-clearance policy to employees even after they leave government service is feared by IAPA to result in arbitrary censorship and to inhibit free debate.

UNESCO

Initiatives taken by or under the aegis of UNESCO were viewed by the assembly with great and justifiable suspicion.

First of all attention was given to the issue of identity cards for journalists. The International Press Institute recently proposed to establish a professional committee which would issue identity cards to all journalists required to go into areas of conflict and warlike situations. The plan also suggests that the committee in question would accept the definition of who is a journalist from the governments of the nations participating. If accepted, UNESCO would be responsible for financing and administrating the IPI project.

IAPA in no uncertain terms condemned the initiative as a potentially dangerous, ill-concieved concept that could lead to government control of who can freely exercise the profession of journalism.

The formation early October in Mexico of a new third world news agency was also seen as potentially threatening to the cause of freedom of the press. ALASEI (for Lation American Agency of Special Information Services) was founded under auspices of UNESCO by a strange mixture of traditional democracies such as Costa Rica, Venezuela and the Domini- ▶



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can Republic and totalitarian governments such as those of Cuba, Nicaragua, Grenada and Haiti. Its goal was defined as seeking the realization of a New World Information Order. The agency is to be financed by the participating governments and international bodies such as UNESCO. This already constitutes the danger of undue government influence on the dissemination of news. But part of the revenues are to come from the sale of the service to newspapers. This presents the possibility of obligatory purchase of the service for media in the member countries, which in turn, raises the fear of obligatory publication.

Exhortation

Worrisome as the overall picture with regard to press freedom is in the Western Hemisphere, according to IAPA's analysis it is not entirely dark. The document containing the conference's conclusions states: "There are now elected governments in several countries previously ruled by military dictatorships and therefore more press freedom. These include



Aguirre

Peru, Ecuador and Bolivia. Brazil is advancing toward more representative government. Elections which (have in the meantime) returned an elected government to Argentina increase the possibility to change restrictive press laws. It should also make easier the investigation into the fate of the thousands "desaparecidos", whose numbers include many journalists. Elections are scheduled next year in Uruguay and eventually in Chile."

The embattled cause of press freedom in the hemisphere forms not only an exhortation to IAPA to remain vigilant but also to those countries such as the Netherlands Antilles which can pride themselves on a clear record. Most of all the call to winning the battle for freedom of expression concerns the journalists themselves. Said Mr. Quesada, Peru's outstanding pressman: "If we journalists demand, with full justification, to be free in the practice of our profession, then we are obliged on the other hand, to proffer honesty and independence; for just as free journalism is vital to democracy, so independence is essential to free journalism. Let us not forget that every right engenders an obligation and that if we wish to deserve the right to express ourselves freely, then we also have the obligation to exercise that right responsibly leaving aside all private interests, to place our newspapers at the service of their readers, the public interest and the defence of the democratic system".

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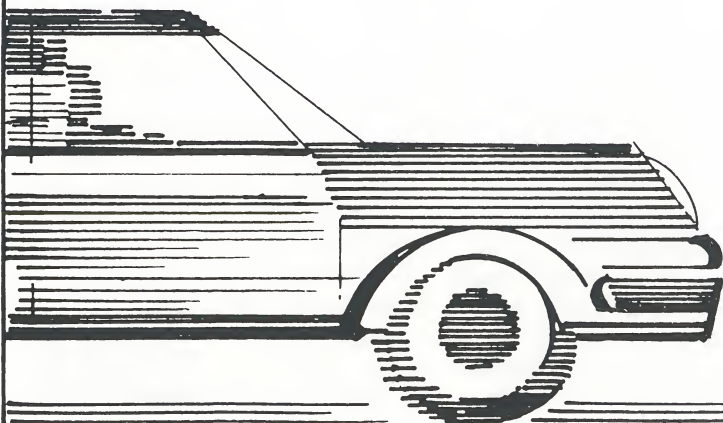
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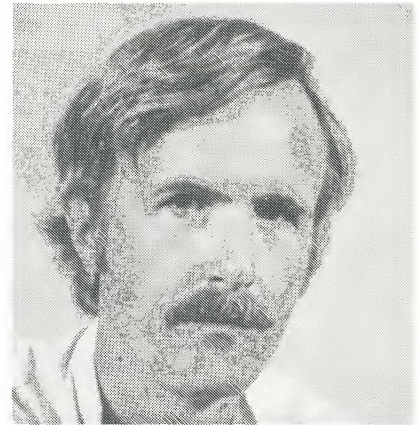
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SOVEREIGNTY

by J.M.Reijntjes



Recently the concept "sovereignty" has been a much discussed subject. A workable definition can be phrased as follows: "the right of a nation to dispose of all things and persons on its territory in full freedom and without intervention from outside". It is related to the "self-determination of peoples" and the "territorial integrity" of states. The Antilles themselves have no full sovereignty, but they are part of a sovereign entity, the Kingdom of the Netherlands. According to the events of the last few weeks there seems to be reason enough to wonder how far sovereignty really reaches.

After having been shocked by the massacre committed by the Bouterse-regime in Suriname last December the news that Aruba-born Maurice Bishop and some of his supporters had been killed by soldiers on Grenada caused new consternation in the Antilles. We realised that after independence something like that can just as easily happen to us. But some of us were even more startled when a few days later American troops, formally requested thereto and supported by Jamaica and five other neighbouring Caribbean islands invaded Grenada. It didn't take many days for our government to condemn the American action, albeit in rather moderate terms. At that moment I was in Washington. Someone said to me jokingly: "Look out, you Antilleans, Curaçao is the only island with a long runway in the Caribbean we didn't occupy yet..." Could it happen just like that? Obviously. But is it also allowed by law?

Principle

Jamaica, Grenada and the USA are all members of the United Nations. The Charter of this organization says: "The

Organization is based on the principle of the sovereign equality of all its members .. All Members shall refrain .. from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity .. of any State ..". This Charter has been elaborated in a solemn Declaration on 24 October 1970. We read: "The General Assembly, .. Convinced that the strict observance by States of the obligation not to intervene in the affairs of any other State is an essential condition to ensure that nations live together in peace with one another .. Solemnly proclaim the following principles:

- The principle that States shall refrain .. from the .. use of force against the territorial integrity .. of any State .. Such a .. use of force constitutes a violation of international law ..
- The principle concerning the duty not to intervene in matters within the domestic jurisdiction of any State .. No State or group of States has the right to intervene, directly or indirectly, for any reason whatsoever, in the internal or external affairs of any other State .. Every State has an inalienable right to choose its political .. system, without interference in any form by another State".

This seems to be quite explicit. However, there are some problems. The main one being that "the State" is decidedly not the same as "the people". When in any State, say Suriname or Grenada, a small group of persons wants to establish a military regime, it is an internal affair of that State. Even if that group forms only a small minority of the people of that State, and even if it leaves the path of democracy, no other State has a legal right to interfere. Other persons or groups of persons in that State who want to get rid of the regime established by such a minority should therefore not rely on foreign nations for

help. At least according to international law, which is based on the assumption of "help yourself".

Spirit

But what if the regime itself relies on another State to stay in the saddle? This seemingly does not change matters, at least not if the regime came to power without interference of that third State. The representatives of, say Grenada, had a perfect right to ask for the assistance of others—even if they were not a democratic regime, nor elected by the people. That is why the USA stated that the Governor of Grenada requested their intervention. It would have given them a justification for their action if the governor had been competent to represent the State of Grenada in this respect. But was he? And what if the other state involved (Cuba) was interfering without invitation of the representatives of the State of Grenada? In everyday-law we would say: the fact, that John breaks the law, does not give Pete the right to do the same. It is up to the police to catch and punish John. But the problem is that there is no international police. It seems to be the American contention that in this case (groups of) other nations have the right to interfere.

Another reason for the intervention given by the Americans was that their countrymen at Grenada's university were endangered. But does this withdraw the case from the "domestic jurisdiction" of Grenada in such a manner that intervention is allowed? Perhaps if it concerned embassy personnel like in Teheran. But in reality these students voluntarily went to Grenada, knowing it had a leftist, more or less Cuba-oriented government. And was

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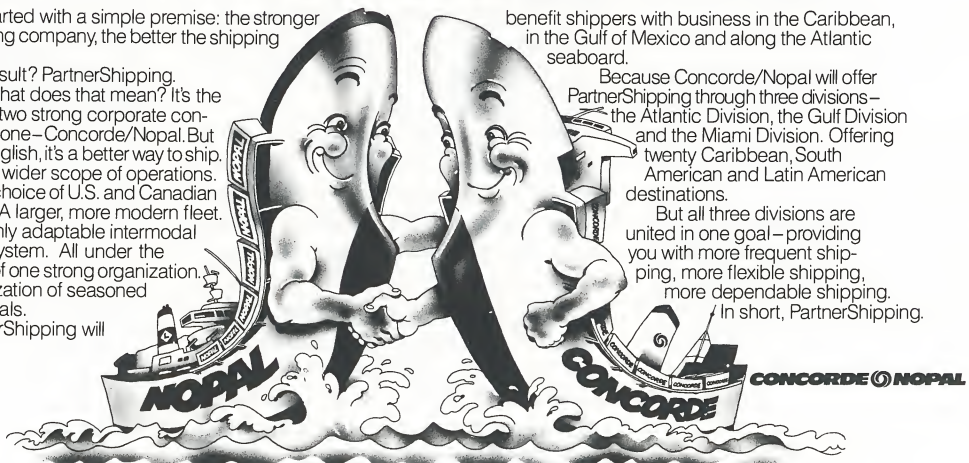
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there really any danger? The argument is not very convincing.

Another question. Does the assumption of "help yourself" hold, when an undemocratic regime degenerates into outright despotism and tramples the most fundamental rights? Doesn't that give another State the right to interfere in behalf of the oppressed people? As a citizen in such a situation I would be grateful to any nation that would save me from such despotism and I would not mind who my saviour is. It would go against my most basic feelings to hear my saviour denounced as violator of international law. Those feelings may indeed have a foundation in law. Let me try to explain.

The Declaration of 1970 uses the term "principles" — not "rules". There exist no principles without exceptions. The Declaration itself states: "In their interpretation and application the above principles are interrelated and each principle should be construed in the context of the other principles". In the same Declaration we find the statement that "States shall co-operate in the promotion of universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all". The purpose is not molded in the form of a principle, but still it is there.

The contention is that under exceptional circumstances (Adolf Hitler, Idi Amin, etc.) the "promotion of universal observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms" justifies an encroachment upon the principles of non-intervention and territorial integrity. It is up to the reader to decide whether such a situation did exist in Grenada.

Reality

What did our Government say about the matter? "In spite of the fact that we understand the motives which led to the appeal for intervention on Grenada, we think that what happened does not comply with the fundamental principles of the Charter of the United Nations." (Government Information Service's press release, dated 28 October 1983).

Is there a sense in deciding whether the American action constituted a violation of international law? Is it more than theory? Sometimes you hear people say that law remains silent when weapons speak. But that is not the main point. Maybe the real purpose of the Americans had more to do with the long runway the Cubans were constructing on Grenada than with "en-

dangered students" and "fundamental human rights". In that case their object was a mainly strategical one, meant to defend their own security and that of allied states in the Caribbean. The sovereignty of those States collided with that of Grenada. Is it very improbable that they acted regardless of the legality of their activities, willingly and knowingly? Which should in that case be the position of the lawyer?

Reality is often stronger than law, and as a result particularly international law for lack of enforcability, is mainly a paper tiger.

Tax treaty

There is still another reason for our renewed interest in sovereignty. This in connection with the tax treaty existing between the Netherlands and the USA, which was effected in 1955. Both the Netherlands and the Antilles are considered as so-called "tax havens", paradises for foreign (not their own) tax payers. Small wonder that the U.S. IRS (Internal Revenue Service) does not feel happy about the existence of those paradises. It is especially upset about the Antilles, because it believes that the Antilles are doing nothing to prevent the wrong people (American citizens) taking advantage of the treaty. And apparently it is not difficult to make that contention plausible. For example in 1981 the amount of US source income paid to recipients in the Antilles was somewhat higher than the amount paid to recipients in another tax haven, Switzerland (1,4 resp. 1,2 billion dollars). Switzerland furthermore collected an amount of 95 million dollars additional tax for the USA — the Antilles not a dollarcent. The Swiss completed many information-forms for the IRS; the Antilles did nothing of the kind. That is why the U.S. government choose the Antilles as first target in its combat against the abuse of tax havens. The American tactics consist in trying to enforce a new tax treaty between the USA and the Antilles.

In a hearing before a subcommittee of the U.S. House of Representatives in April of this year it became evident that they will insist on strong measures. The new treaty will especially have to contain "strong exchange of information and anti-abuse provisions". At this moment we already know that the Antillean law will have to be revised thoroughly to meet the American wishes. To be sure the incompleteness of our laws may be to

blame for the lack of cooperation with the IRS rather than unwillingness on the part of the Antilles.

Ethics

One may ask if it is not an infraction on our sovereignty to be compelled to change our laws, under the threat of losing our financial advantages. Is this not an encroachment upon the Declaration of 1970 which says: "No State may use .. economic .. measures to coerce another State in order to obtain from it the subordination of the exercise of its sovereign rights and to secure from it advantages of any kind ..?" The Americans know that cancelling the tax treaty without concluding a new one would not only mean direct loss of employment for a few hundred people, but also a loss of income for our government to the amount of 30% of its budget.

Yet we can state that in this case the American point of view is not contrary to the Declaration. The Declaration refers to blockades, boycotts etc., in short against some of the methods the Americans are using against Nicaragua. The Declaration does not interfere with two parties trying to acquire advantage in sharp negotiations with each other. The Antilles try to maintain (part of) the off-shore business, the Americans want to keep their easy access to the European money-market, to help maintain a stable regime in the southern Caribbean and to keep the loyal cooperation of Antillean law enforcement officers in their struggle against drug trafficking. Those negotiations can only be seen in the light of "good merchants' customs" — and merchant's ethics are, as we all know, quite elastic. He who wants to get an advantage has to pay. Perhaps it is unusual, but certainly not unethical for the other party to ask for revision of the law.

We give up a piece of sovereignty that was not ours in the first place, and in doing so maintain a financial advantage that is essentially necessary for the existence of our nation more or less on the same level it has now. That is the way things are in the world. You can't have both! He who wants to try otherwise has to close the frontiers, like the Albanians.

Sovereignty is a very important notion, but attach too great importance to it, and it turns against you. ■

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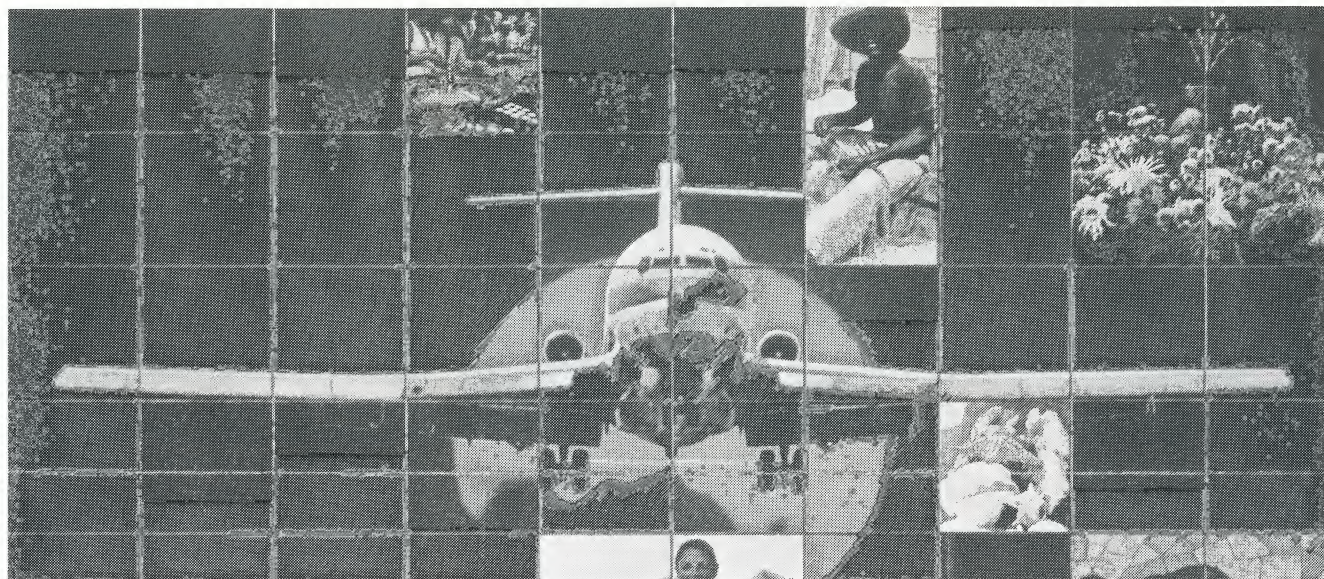
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Difficult times

Indispensable but costly

For starters take a look at Bermuda's profitable tourist industry. The remarkable and rarely mentioned fact is that it is entirely dependent on "foreign" companies to sail and fly in its customers. Notice this: cruise companies compete before the Bermudan government to attain the privilege of docking their vessels right at the pier in town. The island's taxpayers are not confronted with having to take care of deficits run into by local hotels or having to subsidize a national airline daily losing substantial amounts of money!

What this introduction leads up to? To the question whether the most sensible solution for the Antilles' much troubled airline ALM is not to let it go bankrupt. Or, to phrase it slightly differently, whether it is justified to allot so many millions of taxpayer's money to keep an organization afloat, which grew out of all proportion, not in the number of planes but in the number of staff.

The answer was recently provided by the almost disastrous developments at Eastern Airlines. The threat of strikes and possible bankruptcy constituted a friendly reminder to do everything possible to keep ALM in the air.

Both Curaçao and Aruba are served by daily Eastern flights through the Miami gateway. It takes little imagination to realize what would be the

consequences if no "back up" was available to maintain the flow of tourists.

The lesson to be learned is that as long as the islands have not attained a strong position in the tourist market (like Bermuda), they cannot do without an own airline to protect their interests.

The only remaining question is: what price are they willing to pay to keep ALM in the air?

Presently a consulting team of Irish Airlines serves as an interim management of ALM, the General Manager and Financial Director having been fired earlier this year by the company's Board of Directors. One advantage being that the European Community foots the bill at least for

a certain period of time. But whether the team will be capable of leading ALM out of the dark red into a lighter shade of that financially negative colour, is doubtful to say the least.

Consultants are not managers. If so, the team members would be part of the day to day management of Irish Airlines. It therefore remains to be seen if they are qualified enough to lead ALM into a new future. No doubt, they will preach that "more has to be done with less people", but high productivity is a problem in the Antillean community as is the high unemployment figure. The attitude of ALM's unions as reflected in the local press does not hold much promise, they seemingly lack understanding of the vulnerability of the company's state of affairs.

Irish Patrick McNamara



Creating a new market

The news from Aruba is decidedly more inspiring. When the Venezuelan tourist market collapsed due to the "devaluation" of the bolivar, the island was badly hurt. Even if there is some truth in the theory that the Venezuelan rich signed the bankruptcy of their country without incurring any loss themselves, it does not seem likely that they will spend their money stashed away in Swiss or Miami bank-accounts vacationing in Aruba.

Realizing this and aware of the ►

fact that little can be expected from the South American market in general, Aruba decided to capture for itself a second market besides the USA: Europe.

The main problem Aruba's tourism promoters faced in this endeavour is the high rate of the USA dollar. Obviously no European will come to Aruba, if he has to pay the same rate for a hotel room as an American citizen earning his income in greenbacks. In a smart move they managed to involve Dutch carrier KLM in their plans, while securing a commitment by all hotels to charge the lowest possible rates. Thus they managed to create a most attractive 1984 summer product in both their low and high rise hotels.

Meanwhile the former Hilton Hotel on Curaçao and Hotel Bonaire on the flamingo island are eagerly awaiting the arrival of a new management to get them back in shape, create the right kind of atmosphere and secure a high rate of occupancy. But if and when this is



Former Hilton Curaçao

going to happen . . . ?

Fewer go abroad

The local travel trade is beginning to experience the impact of the recession, which though later than elsewhere is now severely afflicting the Antillean economy. As companies are no longer able to pay vacation-allowances and christmas-bonuses, people are suddenly de-

prived of that extra discretionary income permitting them to travel abroad.

A campaign to induce people to spend their holidays within the country is not likely to have much success. The fact that the number of Curaçaoles spending a weekend holiday on Aruba exceeds by far that of Arubans doing the same in Curaçao seems to indicate that the political controversy between the islands is creating an "anti-mood". And anyhow, Antilleans by nature like to go abroad. But those who can still afford their annual or bi-annual trip are beginning to worry about possible limitations on foreign currency. Surveys of the Bank of the Netherlands Antilles indicate that the flow of foreign currency is watched with much more care than ever before. A further deepening of the recession may require appropriate measures in this respect causing in turn a further decline of the local travel trade. ■

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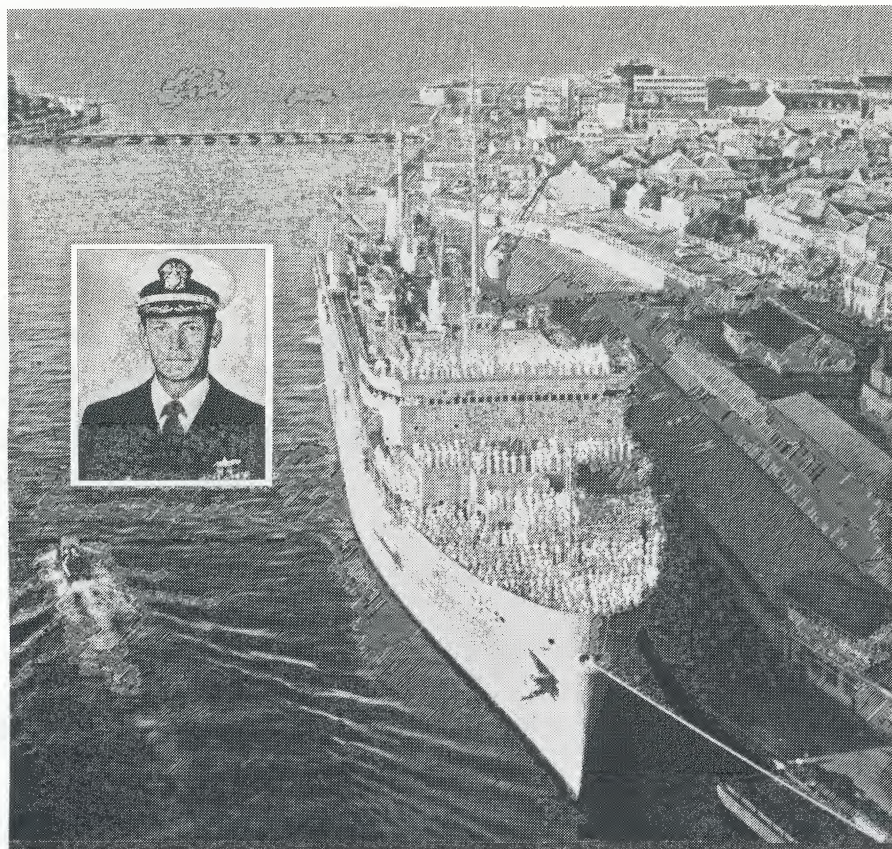
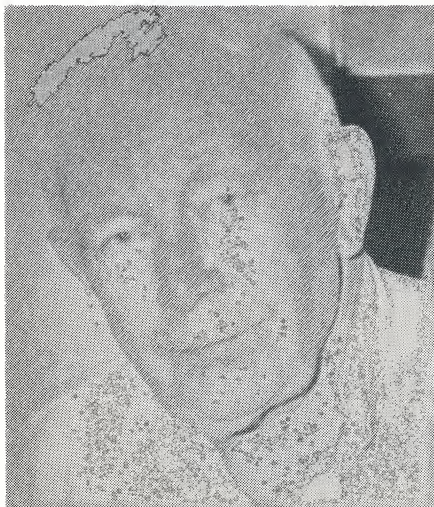
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PEOPLE

Passed away on October 31, **Mr. Lodewijk Daniel Gerharts**, in life one of Bonaire's most outstanding citizens. Known to everybody by his initials L.D., Mr. Gerharts reached the age of 82, fifty of which were spent on the Flamingo island. A successful businessman, he was particularly known and appreciated for his altruistic involvement in Bonaire's society. His name is connected to almost every major development on the island as either founder or initiator. To mention only two: the St. Franciscus Hospital and the national park Washington. During many years Mr. Gerharts served the island and the Netherlands Antilles both as commissioner and member of the legislative council. Many, amongst whom Prime Minister Mr. Don Martina, came to L.D.'s funeral to pay their last respects to a man both Bonaire and the Antilles owe a lot.



Honouring Curaçao as her third port of call on her maiden voyage from a San Diego wharf to Norfolk, Virginia, the USS SHENANDOAH AD 44 moored off for three days in Curaçao's St. Anna Bay. Told proud commanding officer **Thomas M. McNicholas Jr.**: "our ship is the latest and most modern tender (repair ship) of the US navy". The bulky looking vessel (cost appr. US\$ 300 million) possesses capabilities unknown aboard tenders a few years ago, including nuclear

propulsion plant repair facilities and equipment to refuel other ships at sea.

Facilities for the 1,350 member crew are impressive as well. Besides excellent recreational possibilities the Shenandoah is equipped with a complete dental clinic and a hospital with operating theatre. Displacing 22,000 tons the Shenandoah sailed from Curaçao on November 29 towards its commissioning on December 17 in Norfolk. ■

Keeping her visit purposely low profile **Princess Juliana**, former Queen of the Netherlands, travelled to all the six Antillean islands during November last. The specific purpose of her visit: to meet the people who benefited from her present to the Antilles when abdicating the Dutch throne in favour of her daughter Beatrix. Said Her Royal Highness: "having had the privilege of serving as president of the Dutch committee of the Year of the Handicapped, I became intensely aware of the needs of this group of citizens". Thus the funds she made available were earmarked to assist the handicapped in the Antilles. The beloved Queen mother virtually spent her entire stay on the islands visiting the centres established for that purpose with the help of her grant.



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Jacques Veeris, minister of Education and head of the Netherlands Antilles' delegation, displaying his country's flag at Unesco headquarters in Paris.

UNESCO'S NEWEST MEMBER

by Paul Comenencia

"We are looking towards Unesco with some hope as an Organization that is able to contribute towards solving the problems by encouraging dialogue and cooperation between all members of the international community, rich or poor, in order to make the necessary changes and adjustments that would create better living conditions for every human being in the world".

With a tiny delegation of three, headed by Education minister Jacques P. Veeris, the Netherlands Antilles presented itself last month to the 142 member states of Unesco as another developing country in need of assistance, yet also more than

willing to give its modest contribution to the preparation and execution of Unesco programmes in the Caribbean and Latin American region.

As Unesco's newest member, the Netherlands Antilles will participate equally with other member states in all matters pertaining to the General Conference, its committees, commissions and other subsidiary organs. Because of its status of associate member the Antilles will have no voting rights. In exchange, however, for their participation in Unesco activities and a small membership fee of U.S. \$ 13,000, the six islands of the Netherlands Antilles will enjoy free of charge most of the assistance available

through Unesco's network of educational, scientific and cultural programmes. As a result of talks with Unesco officials the central government of the Netherlands Antilles will receive assistance in identifying all historical and natural landmarks on the six islands, in order to include them in international protection and preservation programmes supervised by Unesco.

Impressed with the city's beauty and cultural richness Unesco director general Amadou-Mathar M'Bow personally suggested that all of Willemstad, Curaçao's capital city, be named an historical area worth protecting and preserving. ▶

Furthermore, funding will be provided for a follow-up on a recently organized seminar on the removal of language barriers in the Caribbean. Organized by local scholars and attended by a large number of students of the language problem in the Caribbean, the seminar proved the need for additional and more searching studies on the problem.

In addition Antillean authors will have the chance to have their work translated by Unesco experts free of charge. A special committee will be charged with the drawing up of a list of prominent literary works in Papiamentu to be translated in languages such as French, Spanish, English and Portuguese.

In his address to the General Conference Veeris offered his government's help in the organization of workshops for the training of literacy personnel to combat illiteracy in the Latin American and Caribbean region. While endorsing Unesco's efforts at spreading education and promoting the teaching of foreign languages the Anti-

lean minister expressed concern at the low level of funding in support of programmes regarding special education. He asked for more means to hold seminars and to train senior staff and educators in the techniques of educational planning and management. More specifically Veeris emphasized the importance of Unesco programmes for the promotion of Caribbean languages and called for more projects stimulating the cultural exchange between Caribbean countries. Focusing on the multilingual nature of the Netherlands Antilles and other parts of the area, and also on the increasing cross-cultural and bilateral contacts within the Caribbean and Latin American region, Veeris requested involvement of Unesco personnel in the promotion of the teaching of languages throughout the regions mentioned above.

"Our particular geographical setting and socio-cultural heritage puts us in an extraordinary position in the region", Veeris told delegates attending Unesco's General Conference. He therefore

offered the help of the Netherlands Antilles as a catalyst in the Caribbean.

After his return from Paris, minister Jacques Veeris promised reporters that by the beginning of next year the Netherlands Antilles will have its own National Unesco Committee, which will have the task of coordinating Unesco work on the six islands of the Antilles. As in other matters, the insular nature of the Netherlands Antilles will make the formation of this National Committee a particularly interesting process. ■

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ANTI WESTERN FORCES THREATEN POSTAL INDEPENDENCE

The East-Bloc's zealous attempts to win the favour of Third World countries has at several occasions in the past posed a direct threat to the postal independence of the Netherlands Antilles. It may do so again in 1984!

Self-acclaimed champions of anti-colonialism the East-European member countries of the Universal Postal Union (UPU) demanded the expulsion of non-independent members from the movement whenever the organization met in recent years. Their stance carried favour with a number of member nations for reasons which had little to do with postal affairs and everything with politics.

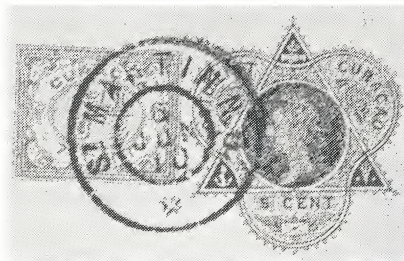
As a consequence also the Netherlands Antilles' long-standing membership was put in jeopardy. In particular because many Third World countries appeared to be totally ignorant about the nature of the relationship between Holland and the Antilles, viewing the last as one of the few remaining colonies.

Ignorance

"What has struck me time and again", says Mr. G. T. Hernandez, director of the Antilles' postal services, "is that people have no idea of our position with regard to Holland. It is generally thought that we are still a colony in the full sense of that word." An observation, which is not only based on experiences at postal congresses, but also at other international meetings. A great help in such situations, according to Mr. Hernandez, is that Antillean delegates to such conferences are always able to speak several languages. Thus they can explain people in their own tongue the Antilles' constitutional position.

At the last UPU - meeting in 1979, however, the above mentioned political forces playing on the ignorance of many

delegates got close to ousting the Antilles. The Government in Willemstad deemed it necessary to send Mr. Hernandez at the last moment to Rio de Janeiro, where the UPU was meeting, to address the assembly. A carefully phrased speech and much lobbying prevented a coalition of East-European and South American states from having their way. But, says Hernandez, one can be very sure that the matter will again come up at the 1984 meeting in Hamburg, West Germany. "Our position", he says, "is fortunately much stronger than before. In Rio we managed to have recorded that the Antilles are an independent member. Although it was agreed that only sovereign states can be full members, it was also recognized that countries which had been accepted before would not now be removed from the membership.



Cultural

Apart from the fact that the Antilles by virtue of their being an autonomous part of the Kingdom of The Netherlands, definitely have a case, it is also a country with its own postal history. The first stamp bearing the name 'Curaçao' was issued in 1873. Since 1954, when the Antilles became an equal partner in the Kingdom, it has conducted its own postal policies. It should be realized that these do not only regard the issuance of stamps as a receipt for the customer who wants to make use of the postal services. Stamps do have a cultural significance, in particular as they promote the image of a country in the world. Hernandez draws in this respect attention to the 1971 issuance of a stamp bearing the image of Luis Brion (see history), in fact the first Antillean to be portrayed on an Antillean stamp! Coun-

tries present themselves to the world community by way of the stamps they issue.

Income

The often confusing relationship in the eyes of other nations between the Antilles and the Netherlands, is of great importance to the country from a postal point of view, Hernandez point out. "Because we are a part of the Kingdom", he explains, "our stamps have great value in particular for Dutch collectors." Sales in Holland (to collectors) amounted in 1982 to well over Naf. 2 million. (Total income of the Antillean Postal Services in that year was Naf. 12,837,414.) Should the Antilles break away from Holland this source of income would certainly diminish considerably as happened in the case of Surinam.

Talking about the relationship to Holland, Mr. Hernandez mentions another reason why our own membership of the UPU is rather important. In general countries accept the principle of reciprocity with regard to handling in and outgoing mail. It was, however, rightly observed that in small countries the outgoing mail far exceeds the incoming. Thus it was agreed that periodically accounts would be settled. Losing its membership of the UPU would also mean losing this financial advantage. For in that case the Antilles would be considered a part of Holland, which because of its size does not benefit from this special arrangement.

Mr. Hernandez, who has been absent from his post as director for a period of almost six years during which he served his country as Minister of Health, is not only enjoying being back at the helm of the Postal Services, but also quite confident that the Antilles will manage to hold on to their rights in the international postal community. Personally he is obviously not prepared to bow down for ideological manipulations, which have little to do with postal affairs and would harm the Antilles considerably. ■

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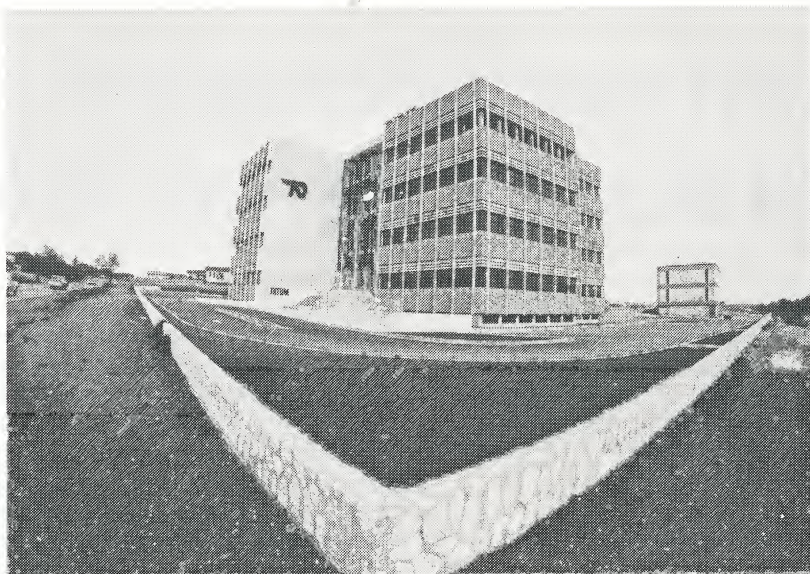
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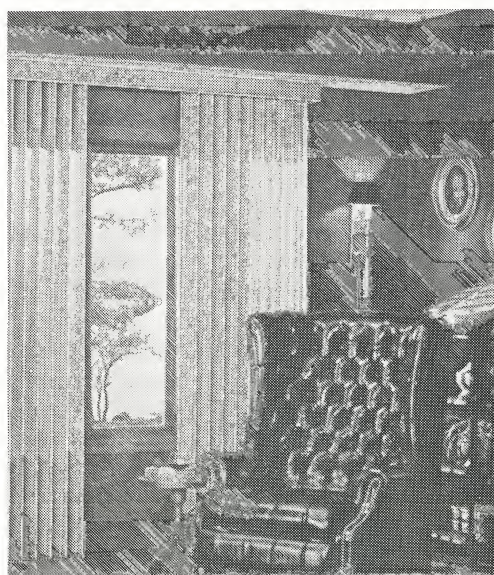
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POSSIBLE ESTABLISHMENT OF SHORT WAVE STATION ON CURAÇAO

by Paul Comenencia

"Stop talking about Curaçao - I'm about to pack up and move down"

Someone getting fed up with hearing a Curacao-fan carrying on and on about the island? Wrong. On the contrary, it is an excerpt from an enthusiastic letter a Philadelphia resident wrote after hearing about the island on Radio Earth, one of the very few commercial shortwave stations in the world.

Radio Earth's central studios are in Miami with bureaus in Chicago, Santo Domingo, Europe, Africa and the Pacific. Its programmes are broadcast via commercial short wave facilities in New Orleans with an effective radiated power of three million watts, reaching most of the globe, say its managers. Radio Earth aims at reaching people with a higher level of education in the USA as well as travel prone people who want to learn about other parts of the world.

Promotion

Since June 1 of this year, Radio Earth has been broadcasting commercials for the Curaçao Tourist Board and for three major tourist hotels on the island. The Curaçao Tourist Board has been running one 60 second spot daily; in addition, one of the three Curaçao Holding Hotels (Government owned) is being promoted in another 60 second spot.

In a daily broadcast called "The World" Radio Earth devotes part of the time to offering its listeners a choice of Caribbean music and information about the region. The programme is called 'This is the Caribbean' and is hosted by well known radio personality Rudy Espinal of Santo Domingo.

The Curaçao campaign on Radio Earth is intended to create international awareness of what the island has to offer, in particular in the United States where many do not even know the island exists. An important aspect of the effort is to promote tourism. Comments from listeners both in the USA and other parts in the world indi-

cate that Radio Earth's campaign is scoring effect. By way of follow-up the Curaçao Tourist Board forwards brochures to those who write to the radio station.

International

Radio Earth's first contact with Curacao, tells General Manager and Executive Producer Jeff White, was established through Bernstone & Associates, consultants trying to interest foreign investors on request of the Curaçao government. "We came to the island, liked it and were liked by the people too." The visit resulted in the setting up of a promotion campaign on Radio Earth in cooperation with the Curaçao Tourist Board and the Curaçao Holding Company.

White claims Radio Earth has more than twice as many listeners in the United States as Radio Havana of Cuba. According to the station's statistics, more than 440,000 people tune in weekly to Radio Earth.

People listening to the station usually have a strong interest in foreign and international matters and are not satisfied by what their local stations offer. Consequently it is assumed that this category of listeners is also more apt to travel abroad.

Project

Tourist promotion is not the only tie that binds Curaçao and Radio Earth. Presently the Netherlands Antilles Telecommunications Department is considering an official request by the station to establish a permanent transmitting unit and studios on Curaçao. The geographical location is excellent for short wave broadcasting, Jeff White explains. Signals sent from Curaçao will travel to almost anywhere in the world because of the presence of large masses of salt water. The fact that *Radio Nederland* and *Trans World Radio* (see Bonaire) have been established on Bonaire, Curaçao's sister island, for many years broadcasting all over the world, enforces White's theory.

The establishment of a short wave station on Curaçao may take some time, however. The Antillean Government still has to study the legal and other implications of the project. Jeff White, on the other hand, is facing the problem of increasing his station's income in order to be able to put up the more than one million dollars needed to build facilities adequate for the intended purpose. The importance of the project both for Curaçao and Radio Earth, however, should be a strong incentive to all parties concerned to succeed. ■



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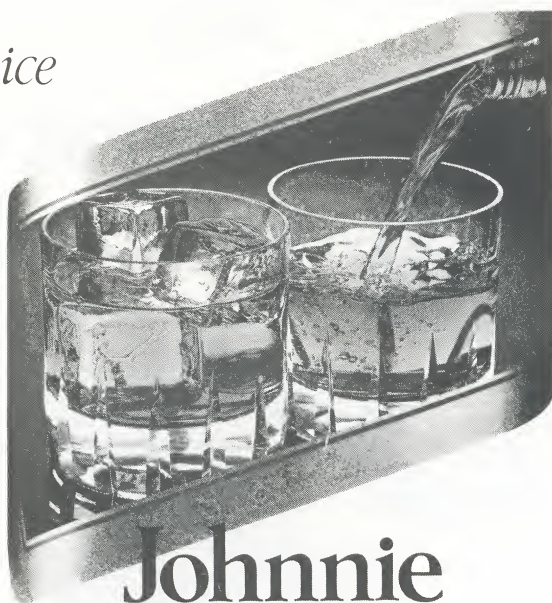
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FIRST CONCLUSION OF ANTILLEAN - VENEZUELAN PROJECT

Curaçao's contribution to the independence of Latin America discovered to be substantial

"The Netherlands Antilles and Curaçao in particular have played a fascinating role in the history not only of international trade but even more so in that of politics and the pursuit of human freedom". A conclusion voiced by Mr. Roberto Palacios, diplomat and historian, who supervises an Antillean-Venezuelan research project called 'Brión-Bolívar'. The project was launched on occasion of the bicentennial celebration of the birth of Latin America's great liberator Simon Bolivar. The team in charge focussed its attention in particular on documents and records in the old Curacao and Dutch archives, which because of the language barrier have hitherto hardly been taken into account when studying Bolivar and his associates. Its findings are presently attracting great interest in international academic circles as they confirm the relatively recent emphasis historians are placing on Bolivar's role as a champion of human rights rather than a military genius. Even more exciting is the discovery that Curacao contributed in no small measure to the independence struggle not only in terms of money and manpower but also and maybe even in the first place to the noble idealism underlying Bolivar's revolutionary thrust. Says Mr. Palacios "I am convinced that our project, once concluded, will contribute to place Curacao and the Netherlands Antilles in the stream of world history and at the same time increase their self-knowledge, thus inducing them to take pride in past achievements and making them confident of the potential of their islands and people situated as they are at the crossroads of North European, Afro-Caribbean and Spanish-American civilizations".

A realistic conviction, one may add, as the contribution given by Curacao did not only originate amongst its rich upperclass but more in particular from the less privileged groups like catholics, Jews and slaves. In a recent speech before Curacao's Rotary Club Mr. Palacios summed up his team's first conclusions.



Simon Bolivar

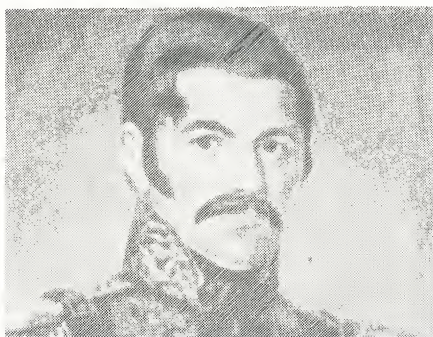
For a long time students and admirers of Bolivar used to see him primarily as a warrior, as a soldier, a genius of military strategy, whose sword broke the power of Spain for the sole purpose of transferring the government from the hands of the Madrid officials to their own Latin American chiefs. Decades of dictatorship in many countries of this continent obscured the universal dimensions of Bolivar's vision, his teaching and his struggle for human rights, for democracy, for the freedom of the slaves, for racial and social equality and for economic justice, all of which became more and more de-emphasized in favour of a rather caesarean and authoritarian image, more in keeping with the repressive political regimes of the past than with the ideals Bolivar really stood for.

During the last decades important research on the life and writings of Bolivar has re-emphasized the time-less and uni-

versal dimensions and significance of his work for humanity and this explains the growing interest in Bolivar shown by the United Nations, the Unesco, in Africa, Asia and the Caribbean.

Within the scope of this research, Doctor José Luis Salcedo Bastardo, the President of the Executive Committee on the Bolivar Bicentennial will publish one of the volumes of our Antillean-Venezuelan project. In his famous books *Vision and Revision of Bolivar* and *Bolivar, a Continent and its Destiny*, Salcedo points out that Bolivar in the twenty years of his public life, in his writings and in his actions constructed a coherent program for a revolution that would create a new South America — a new political and economic order in the Spanish world.

At the time Bolivar was born Spanish American society was characterized by terrible inequalities, the Indians and the



Luis Brion

negro slaves finding themselves at the base of the pyramid. The mass of the people, the 'pardos' or coloured people, a mixture of whites, Indians and negroes, were the object of contempt, exploitation and heavy social discrimination. And the locally born whites had no political rights whatsoever. Spanish absolutism exercised by Spanish born peninsular officials was manifest not only in the political sphere, but also in the field of economics and religion.

The mercantilist system gave the Spanish Sovereign complete control over production and the entire economic process including consumption. There was neither freedom of thought nor of expression; neither freedom of movement nor of residence. There was no freedom of work since there were wide and detailed restrictions on access to professional training and on the right to practice. There was not even freedom of worship since this was viewed as a threat to Spanish unity. The expulsion of the Jews from Spain had been decreed in 1492 and ever since that time the Inquisition's aim was to destroy Judaism in all the Spanish lands. The Spanish absolutist system in short was a totalitarian regime under the Spanish Crown. To Bolivar independence from the Spanish Crown meant a way of seizing power as a precondition for the establishment of a new and more just political, social and economic order in the Spanish lands. For without the seizure of power which independence implied, that is, without the possession of the concrete means of government, without holding the levers of authority, Bolivar could do nothing to transform the Spanish American world in accordance with his ideals.*

Bolivar's new political order was to be based on the will of the people. He proclaimed that Venezuelans were free men, independent of all authority other than the one set up by their own votes, subject to their own will. Sovereignty, according to Bolivar, resided in the will of the citizens,

meaning the mass of the people. What Bolivar aimed at in his fight for independence was a political revolution and when after 1816 he strove for the abolition of slavery and social inequality his fight became a social revolution as well. The principle of absolute racial equality was one of the cornerstones of his thinking.*

Freedom of thought and of expression were vital elements in his new political order. According to Bolivar the state should be neutral in religious matters, guaranteeing the freedom of worship without supporting any particular group. All the odious iniquities of the Inquisition with their restrictions against non-Catholics and Jews in particular ought to be swept away.*

Another important element of Bolivar's political order was economic justice. Redistribution of land was the most tangible of Bolivar's measures, but he introduced other ones aimed at a revolutionary advance in economic and social matters and the most cumbersome restrictions on trade and work were to be removed. Curacao, although being a more tolerant and liberal society than its Spanish American counterparts nevertheless still was a society based on slavery, on inequality and on religious and racial discrimination and on the complete absence of political rights for most of its free population. This is why Bolivar and all he stood for had a profound impact on the people of Curacao; on the other hand Curacao and the Antilles had their impact too on Bolivar and the success of his movement.

Bolivar had a profound impact on the Jewish community of Curacao ever since his visit to this island in 1812. We all know how he was helped by the family of Mordechai Ricardo when he found himself practically penniless after the confiscation of his funds by the English Governor. He made a profound impression on Ricardo who remained closely linked to the Independence Movement all through the rest of his life. Juan de Sola, Ricardo's cousin, became one of Bolivar's most ardent supporters and fought bravely in the decisive Battle of Carabobo. Benjamin Henriquez became a Captain in Bolivar's Army and was a member of the famous expedition that sailed from Aux Cayes in Haiti under the command of Luis Brion. Benjamin Henriquez, when he came to Curacao in July 1816, to recover from a

serious illness, was imprisoned by the Colonial Authorities, who considered his democratic ideals dangerous to the established order in Curacao, and later on was even banished from the island in spite of his Dutch citizenship. In the Hague we have found many documents relative to this Jewish hero of the War of Latin American Independence.

Many other inhabitants of Curacao and Aruba joined the Independence Movement. Coloured people, blacks and slaves joined the Liberation Army or became sailors in Brion's Navy. The Colonial Government took severe measures against them because they were very much afraid of the influence the freedom fighters could exert on the slave population and on the masses of Curacao. If any one of them returned to Curacao, Aruba or Bonaire, he was either imprisoned or perpetually banished, which was, as we have just seen, what happened to Benjamin Henriquez. For this reason many of them, when arriving in Venezuela, pretended to be from an other country and in many cases changed or modified their names to avoid future reprisals in the Antilles. We are now trying to trace as many names as possible. Through the Dutch records some Antilleans already have been clearly identified: Claas Limberg, Ambrosius Berry, Heintje Rissen, Juan Pinedo, all of whom were sailors in Brion's Fleet.

The most famous natives of Curacao in ▶

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* See: José Luis Salcedo Bastardo: "Bolivar a Continent and its Destiny", 1978, p. 59 - 130.

the Liberation of Latin America were, of course, Manuel Piar, one of its greatest Generals, and Luis Brion, the Admiral of Great-Colombia. We have recently discovered a document about Luis Brion in which Bolivar stated that Brion had saved the Republic at three different occasions and that the new nation owed its life and soul to Brion and that Brion was its everything. The extraordinary importance of Brion to the Independence Movement was once more highlighted by Bolivar in a letter written after the death of the Admiral, when Bolivar proclaimed him his First Companion in the struggle for the liberation of Great-Colombia. Bolivar also said that Great-Colombia owed half of its well-being to Brion, in other words the Independence of Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador and Panama was partly owed to Brion. Many new documents on Brion, recently discovered in Venezuela, Colombia and Europe add a new dimension to Bolivar's words giving them a more profound meaning within the context of his Liberation. When Bolivar said that Brion was his First Companion in the struggle for the liberation of Colombia (according to the light thrown by the new documents) he meant that Brion was his First Companion in the struggle for human rights and democracy, his First Companion in the struggle for the freedom of slaves and racial equality, his First Companion in the struggle for economic justice.

When Bolivar said that Great Colombia owed part of its independence to Brion, the new documents tell us that it was only through Brion that Bolivar was able to achieve the mastery of the seas against the Spaniards. The sea was an extremely important strategic factor in the War of Independence. Without the mastery of the sea it would have been impossible to beat the Spaniards on land. Brion was Bolivar's closest partner in the logistics of the war. He ensured the flow of supplies, arms and ammunitions, indispensable in the war of the liberation armies.

Brion was also indispensable to Bolivar in the financing of the war. New documents clearly show the enormous financial contribution of Brion and his family to the war. This contribution consisted not only of personal funds but of the immense credit the Brion family enjoyed in the countries of the Caribbean, as well as in America and Europe. The new research on Brion has, as was the case with Bolivar, brought forward the universal dimensions and significance of his personality and his



Roberto Palacios

work. He was primarily a fighter for human rights and a fighter for human dignity. His ships and his guns were merely instruments to achieve the political revolution in the Spanish lands, a revolution which he hoped — as new documents show — would extend to all the Caribbean and to the Dutch islands as well. Brion, like many idealists before him, was not rewarded for his immense sacrifices. He died in poverty and extremely sad because he felt that, excepting Bolivar, people had been ungrateful to him after all he had done.

Brion's contribution to the Independence of Latin America and to the quest for human freedom can be seen as a reflection of the contribution of the whole of the island of Curacao. His revolutionary ideology was chiefly formed in Curacao and in the Amsterdam of the days of the Batavian Republic. His military training and know-how, which served Bolivar so well, came from Curacao during the days of the struggle against the British. The ships which formed the nucleus of the Liberation Fleet were Curacao ships, some of which were even registered in Curacao, as new documents have shown. The crews of these ships were partly from the Netherlands Antilles. The money for the war was provided by firms in Curacao and the credit of his family which helped to finance the war had its origin in Curacao too.

For a long time after his death Brion was practically forgotten, not only in Venezuela but also in his native Curacao. Thanks to recent efforts made in Venezuela and thanks to the extraordinary initiative taken by the Antillean Government we shall, in the future, know much more not only about the achievements of Brion, but also about the contribution of other Antilleans to the War of Independence of Latin America, a war which in its most idealistic phase was a war for the rights of man, a war for human dignity, a war for human freedom. ■

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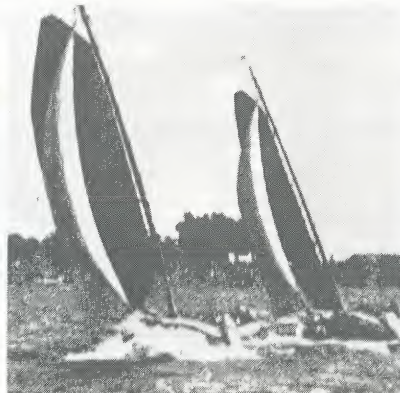
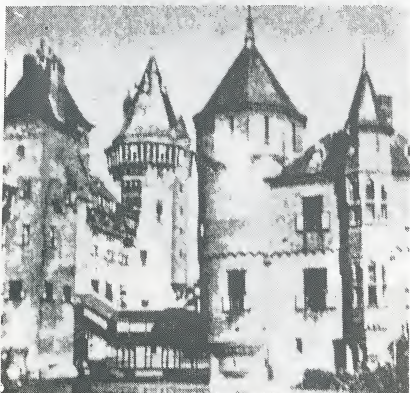
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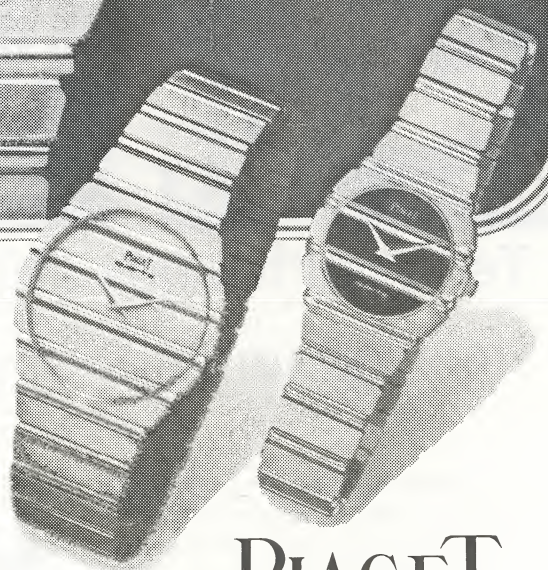
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